

Lester J. Gates Middle School Program of Studies 2023 - 2024



Charting a Course for Excellence and Equity

**Lester J. Gates Middle School
Program of Studies
2023-2024**

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About Equity

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Massachusetts General Laws prohibit sexual harassment and also prohibits discrimination based on special needs; sexual orientation; race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry or sex, age or disability. Pursuant to this, the following information is provided for use by Scituate Public School System, parents, students, and other interested parties.

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Program of Studies
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Lester J. Gates Middle School

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians:

Gates Middle School strives to meet the academic and social needs of all learners in a safe and supportive learning environment. That students are clustered in teams reflects our belief that students should be at the center. Teachers look to provide engaging opportunities for students to grow, excel, and thrive during their middle school experience. The Gates Middle School *Program of Studies* is designed to provide students and parents with an overview of the courses offered for our sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. We also represent the connections that courses have to Scituate High School, so that students can see the multiple paths ahead in their coursework.

We are committed to providing students with challenging and engaging curricula, and also dedicate ourselves to supporting students as they build their independence as learners and cultivate their personal learning passions. We appreciate your partnership as we embark on the exciting journey that middle school provides!

Sincerely,

Ryan Beattie
Gates Middle School Principal

The Gates Middle School

There are six academic teams at Gates Middle School. Teams All Stars (A) and Brave (B) support our sixth-grade students, teams Champion (C) and Dynamite (D) support our seventh graders, and teams Extreme (E) and Falcons (F) support our eighth grade students. All teams have four teachers who are dedicated to one discipline each. The four core subjects covered on all academic teams are English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Over the past five years, we have worked to design learning experiences that reflect the core principles of project-based learning. We believe that students learn best and are engaged the most when they are doing authentic work. Collaborating across disciplines, teachers work to design performances and projects that involve more than one discipline.

We offer many co-taught classes at Gates to meet the learning needs of students, and believe all students benefit when teachers work together as true collaborators. Classes can be co-taught by special education staff or by our math and ELA literacy teachers.

Students may choose between Latin, Spanish, Mandarin, and French for their World Language requirement.

We also offer exploratory courses: Physical Education, Computer Technology, Engineering, Art, Music, Health, Wellness, and Drama. We also run a wide variety of after-school clubs and activities so our students can get involved in the Gates community during the year and beyond the school day. Students eat during one of three lunches served daily.

Gates Middle School has a professional and caring staff, consisting of highly skilled educators who understand the challenges of this unique age group. To support students, one school counselor assigned to each grade level. The list of other support staff include special education paraprofessionals, a METCO director, a school psychologist, a speech and language pathologist, an ELL teacher, an ELA literacy teacher, a math literacy teacher, our custodians and kitchen staff, and our secretarial staff. We continue to grow ourselves as learners and look to stay current with research and practices that best support middle schoolers. We strive to offer a challenging academic climate, but also one that puts emphasis on social and personal growth and responsibility. We highly encourage parent involvement in our school through the Gates P.T.O., teaching on Career Day, chaperoning field trips and dances, and volunteering in our Library/Media Center.

Course Overview by Grade

Grade 6 Courses

English Language Arts
Math
Science
World Geography and Ancient Civilization I
World Language
Physical Education
Art
School Counseling
Health
Music
Drama
Digital Literacy and Computer Science
STEAM Lab Modeling
STEAM Lab Manufacturing
Academic Strategies**
EL (English Language Education)**

Grade 7 Courses

English Language Arts
Math
Science
World Geography and Ancient Civilization II
World Language
Physical Education
Wellness (Health and School Counseling)
Art
Music
Drama
Library Media Research
Engineering
Academic Strategies**
EL (English Language Education)**

Grade 8 Courses

English Language Arts
Math
Science
Government and Civic Life
World Language
Physical Education
Wellness (Health and School Counseling)
Art
Robotics
Library Media Research
Digital Literacy and Computer Science
Music
Academic Strategies**
EL (English Language Education)**

Gates Middle School Placement Review Process

It is important to maintain clear communication between student, parent, and teacher, particularly when a teacher recommendation differs from the course that the student/parent feels is more appropriate. In order to facilitate understanding when this difference occurs, the parent is invited to speak with the teacher and/or other school staff. After communicating with the teacher, if parents are not in agreement with the teacher's recommendation, parents must complete the placement review request form, which can be downloaded from the Gates website. Parents must complete the form and return it to the Gates Middle School.

Academic Course Offerings (listed in Alphabetical Order)

Digital Literacy and Computer Science

Grade 6 DL&CS

The goal of this course is to introduce students to computational thinking through algorithm design and computer programming. Students use developmentally appropriate tools such as Scratch (block-based programming) to access and develop the core concepts and skills of Computer Science without being impeded by high levels of abstraction and syntax. Projects in this course emphasize the creativity inherent in Computer Science.

Grade 8 DL&CS

This course runs in conjunction with Grade 8 Engineering as students complete a project that challenges them to learn and apply new skills such as computer programming, project planning, and manufacturing. They learn how to make connections between the physical and virtual worlds. During the 12-week project, students create prototypes of interactive exhibits to share information about a personal interest. They use the Scratch programming language to develop a computer program and a Makey Makey to connect to a controller that they construct from conductive and non-conductive materials.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

6th Grade English Language Arts

The objective of the sixth-grade ELA program is to develop students' reading, writing, speaking, listening, language, and critical thinking skills. Thematic curriculum units are aligned with MA Curriculum Frameworks and are based on modeled lessons using mentor texts to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the skills and content in reading and writing. Students build their reading skills by studying novels, plays, poetry, and nonfiction both in the classroom and independently at home. Students write for different purposes and in a variety of modes, including narrative, explanatory, and argumentative. Students improve their oral communication skills through class discussion and informal and formal presentations.

Content/Material Used:

Students will read a selection of novels, short stories, drama, fiction, poetry, and nonfiction. The specific texts used are finalized each summer and are available in September.

7th Grade English Language Arts

In Grade 7 ELA, students continue to develop reading and writing skills that help them move from the literal understanding of texts (what the text means) to inferential understanding (what the author is trying to say). Students will learn to use active reading strategies to study elements of drama, poetry, short stories, and novels to gain an understanding of all genres, and to ascertain a text's theme or purpose. To guide our reading and use of strategies, as well as discussions and writing, students will look for mirrors and windows in each text, while developing their answers to the course's thematic essential question: *Who am I, and who do I want to become?* Students will learn how the structure of writing is dictated by its purpose and will write open responses, narratives, poetry, and expository essays. Authentic performance tasks will also provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning in each unit.

An independent reading program is an integral component of the curriculum, giving students the ability to practice the skills they learn in class independently, develop time-management skills, and practice their reading both inside and outside the classroom.

Content/ Materials Used:

Students will read a selection of novels, short stories, drama, fiction, poetry, and nonfiction. The specific texts used are finalized each summer and are available in September.

8th Grade English Language Arts

In Grade 8 English, students engage with literature in a more abstract manner, exploring texts and the questions they raise in more depth, making significant leaps in understanding the relationships within and between different readings and genres. They further develop their ability to draw inferences and refine their active reading skills. Building upon their progress in 7th grade, student readers have the opportunity to synthesize multiple texts and genres simultaneously, integrating knowledge gained from their previous genre study. This expansion allows them to explore various genre units, aiming to develop a nuanced comprehension of multiple genres and uncover the themes and purposes of the texts they encounter. Throughout the year, students actively participate in discussions, writing activities, and reflective exercises, identifying parallels within literature as well as connections between the literary works and their own lives. The selected texts for study encompass a range of genres, including novels such as *The Giver* and *Chains*, plays like *12 Angry Men*, memoirs, short stories, poems, and nonfiction pieces. Writing assignments, which emerge from the ideas and strategies explored in their reading, serve as a means for students to express their understanding and insights. Guided by essential questions and their own inquiries, students will experience more independence with their reading, writing, and discussions in a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

Content/ Materials Used:

Students will read a selection of novels, short stories, drama, fiction, poetry, and nonfiction. The specific texts used are finalized each summer and are available in September.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

English Language Education (ELE)

English Language Education (ELE) is for students whose first language is not English or whose parent(s)' first language is not English. It is an individualized course for those students identified as needing instruction in listening to, speaking, reading and/or writing English. The class is designed according to students' levels of English Language Proficiency.

FINE ARTS

Art Overview

The 6th, 7th and 8th grade art curriculum is part of a developmental process that begins in first grade. The goals of the program are to teach art content, to facilitate personal expression, and to encourage visual thinking and problem solving. This standards-based art curriculum continues with the initiatives of the elementary art program in the investigation of the elements and principles of design.

Grade 6 Art

The sixth grade art program reinforces the concepts and skills taught in our elementary art program. These concepts include the elements of art and the principles of design, as well as an introduction to artists both contemporary and historical. Students are offered the opportunity for self-expression in a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. Units of study include drawing from observation, design, sculpture, functional ceramics, painting, mixed media and color theory.

Grade 7 Art

The 7th grade Art program will continue to examine a variety of wet and dry mediums, continuing to expand on the foundation that has been introduced in drawing, painting and sculpture.

Units of Study include expanding on the following: 1 point perspective; basic color theory; drawing from observation; and functional ceramics.

Each unit has an emphasis on developing acute observation skills as well as creative expression. Students experience individual and group instruction and each child is encouraged and equipped to achieve results that they may have never thought possible. The program also supports a weekly after school Art Club open to all students.

Grade 8 Art

The 8th grade Fine Arts program involves a series of projects that are strongly linked to the study of art and formal design. Students investigate a variety of mediums such as clay, tempera painting, watercolor, oil pastel, color pencils, scratch board, ink pens, and pencils, along with a basic introduction into digital media.

Units of Study include: drawing from observation; advanced color theory; sculptural ceramics; and 2 point perspective.

Students are encouraged to think as individuals and use the Elements and Principles of Design as tools to problem-solve. Art history serves as a basis to link applied art to the world around them. The program also supports a weekly after school Art Club open to all students.

Music Overview

Music in the 6th, 7th and 8th grade is centered on the idea that every student is a musician, regardless of experience. All of the courses emphasize a hands-on, engaging approach to a standards-based music curriculum. The aspects of music that are emphasized include performing songs, singing, reading music notation, and composing, as well as the idea that music is accessible to every student.

Grade 6 Music

Students in 6th grade will reinforce previously learned skills and concepts and continue to expand on their development of: reading music, singing, playing instruments, improvisation, composition and critical response. Reading music includes emphasis on mixed rhythms, meters, identifying intervals and chords. Singing concept includes: 2 and 3 part harmony, varied repertoire, opportunity to participate in grade level chorus. Improvisation includes: using Orff instruments and percussion instruments. Composition connects to: creating simple melodies and lyrics. Critical Response includes: evaluating student performance, developing listening skills, identifying musical elements in a variety of repertoire, and comparing and contrasting music of different styles.

Grade 7 Music

Students in 7th grade have the opportunity to learn beginning piano. The students move from simple songs to more complex songs, of their choice, while as a class the focus is on several different topics including several projects. The first project is the Duet Project, which helps students improve their rhythm reading and collaborative skills. The second project is the “Let It Be” Project, which teaches students how to play an accompaniment using chords. The third project is the Songwriting Project, in which students learn the

composing techniques of repetition, variation and song form and use those techniques to compose a 4-Line Song. The final project of them term is the Piano Recital.

Grade 8 Music

Students in 8th grade have the opportunity to learn basic guitar skills. The units of study include: Introduction to the Guitar; Rhythm Guitar; Lead Guitar & Reading Guitar Tablature; Songwriting; Performance Projects: Preparing and performing a song independently.

Grade 6 Band

The Gates grade 6 band is an ensemble of wind and percussion instruments, which focuses on the literature appropriate for the standards-based skills and concepts introduced to grade 6 instrumentalists. The band rehearses twice each week and instrument lessons are taught during the school day. The grade 6 band performs concerts during the school year. Regular practice and attendance at all events is expected from each student.

Grade 7 & 8 Band

The Gates 7-8 Band is an ensemble of wind and percussion instruments, which focuses on the literature appropriate for a balanced middle school group. The band rehearses twice each week and instrument lessons are taught during the school day. The band performs several concerts each year and marches in the Memorial Day Parade in May. Regular practice and attendance at all events is expected from every student.

Grade 6 Chorus

The Gates Grade 6 Chorus rehearses twice weekly during the school day in preparation for concerts during the school year. Skills and concepts introduced in grade 5 are reinforced and further developed. The chorus performs songs which feature 2 and occasionally 3 part harmony. The repertoire includes standards-based music from a variety of genres and traditions.

Grade 7 & 8 Chorus

The Gates Chorus rehearses twice weekly during the school day in preparation for concerts in December, March and June. The chorus performs songs in 3 parts: soprano, alto, and baritone. The repertoire includes music from a variety of genres and traditions. Additional events of the Chorus include a Music Competition/Canobie Trip and Spring for the Arts.

Grade 6th and 7th Drama Overview:

Students will enhance their presentation and analytical skills by exploring the theatrical worlds of pantomime and improvisation.

Pantomime: Students will begin this unit by honing their skills of interpreting and presenting body language, physically creating unique and expressive characters, and using conflicts to drive scenes forward. As a result students will gain presentational skills that can be applied to all areas of their academics and life.

Improvisation: Students will expand from their pantomime background by adding the elements of speech and vocal technique to their development of character and plot. Through a series of improvisational scene and game structures students will use the basic rules of improv to experience acting and reacting to situations logically, creatively, and in ways that support their peers on and off the stage.

HEALTH / WELLNESS & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education - Grade 6

Grade 6 Physical Education class is a mixed-gender class that meets for three minimesters (approximately 6 weeks each trimester) during the course of the year. Students will experience units in the three primary domains: motor skill development, fitness concepts, and personal and social competencies. Throughout the 6th grade curriculum, students will focus on the concept of “inclusion.” Students will have the opportunity to develop relationships, communication skills, and understanding of differences. Students will be exposed to units such as: net games, invasion activities, track and field events, as well as trust-building activities including rock wall traversing. As a highlight experience, students will demonstrate their understanding of locomotor skills and create their own Gymnastics routine and perform it LIVE!

Physical Education - Grade 7

Grade 7 Physical Education class is a mixed-gender class that meets for three minimesters (approximately 6 weeks each trimester) during the course of the year. Students will experience units in the three primary domains: personal and social competencies, motor skill development and fitness concepts. Throughout the 7th grade experience, the students focus on the concept of “respect.” Students learn how to work together during situations, treat each other fairly, and support one another in order to create a positive and productive learning environment. Through experiences such as team-building challenges, outdoor adventure course activities, and partnered workouts, students will gain the skills to be a supportive classmate. Additional experiences include team activities such as Disc Golf and volleyball. As a highlight experience, students will explore Tinikling, a Filipino folk dance, and discover ways to infuse it with today’s dancing trends.

Physical Education - Grade 8

Grade 8 Physical Education class is a mixed-gender class that meets for three minimesters (approximately 6 weeks each trimester) during the course of the year. Students will experience units in the three primary domains: personal and social competencies, motor skill development and fitness concepts. Throughout the 8th grade experience, the students focus on the concept of “community.” Students learn how to group problem-solve, treat each other fairly in play, and support one another’s learning. Through experiences such as team-building challenges, outdoor adventure course activities, and partnered workouts using heart rate technology, students will further develop their leadership. As a highlight experience, students will take a deeper dive into current trends in fitness, lifelong activities, issues facing today’s teens, and nutrition and bring their findings to life through FitFest, an interactive showcase! The 8th-grade experience is enriched through a series of units all of which focus on developing the “whole student.”

Health Education - Grade 6

The primary goal of Health Education is to educate students on the importance of healthy decision-making in order to support students to maintain a positive attitude and healthy body. Doing so improves a student’s ability to thrive and persevere. Health Education focuses on the core concepts of the MA Health frameworks: health literacy, healthy self-management, and health promotion. Students work to develop strategies to improve personal, family and community health, practice skills, analyze information, and identify health care services they may need throughout their life to promote and maintain good health. The foundation of Health lessons are based on the *Great Body Shop*® curriculum. The *Great Body Shop*® 6th Grade curriculum uses research-based educational pedagogy that has been shown to positively impact student behavior and achievement. The *Great Body Shop*® is aligned with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework. The topics

covered include: injury prevention & personal safety, nutrition, functions of the body, growth and development/cycle of family life, disease prevention, substance misuse prevention, community health and safety (violence prevention), self-worth, mental & emotional health, community & environmental health, and personal fitness. Students will also have the opportunity to taste new foods and apply hands-on nutrition concepts through food preparation and cooking activities.

Wellness - Grades 7 and Grade 8

The focus of Wellness education is healthy decision-making. Wellness classes meet for three trimesters (approximately 6 weeks each trimester) during the course of the year. Wellness curriculum in 7th and 8th grade is delivered by the health teacher and school counselor. The health teacher and school counselor will both teach lessons independently and collaboratively based on subject matter. Throughout the year, students work to develop strategies to improve personal, family and community health, practice skills, analyze information, and identify health care services they may need throughout their life to promote and maintain good health. One of the resources used for Wellness lessons is the *Great Body Shop*® curriculum. The *Great Body Shop*® curriculum uses research-based, age-appropriate educational pedagogy that has been shown to positively impact student behavior and achievement. The *Great Body Shop*® is aligned with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework. The topics covered include: becoming a lifelong learner, body systems, fitness and nutrition, cycle of life, social and emotional health, disease and illness prevention, safety, injury and violence prevention, substance misuse prevention, and consumer, community & environmental health. The 7th and 8th grade Wellness curriculum also utilizes the research-based *Second Step*® program to help students learn skills to make healthy choices, understanding the detriments of substance misuse, bullying, cyber-bullying, and peer pressure. Students will also have the opportunity to taste new foods and apply hands-on nutrition concepts through food preparation and cooking activities.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics Overview

Mathematical problem solving requires the solver to search for a method for solving a problem rather than following a set procedure. The mathematics curriculum guidelines envision that all students in Scituate achieve mathematical competency through a strong mathematics program that emphasizes problem solving and communicating mathematical reasoning. Acquiring such competency depends on a clear, comprehensive, coherent, and developmentally appropriate set of standards to govern curriculum expectations. Students will formulate questions, model problem situations in a variety of ways, generalize mathematical relationships, and solve problems in both a mathematical and an everyday context. The ability to communicate mathematical ideas coherently is an essential component of a student's mathematical development. By talking and writing about mathematics, students will make convincing arguments that represent mathematical ideas both verbally and symbolically. As much as possible, student's and teachers relate the content to the Standards for Mathematical Practice to enhance and connect learning to a process rather than performance.

Standards for Mathematical Practice

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

6th Grade Math

In grade 6, instructional time focuses on five critical areas of number sense: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division, and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking. (5) reasoning about geometric shapes and their measurements, finding lengths of sides and area of plane figures, and surface area and volumes of 3-dimensional shapes. Student's are supported with various ways of learning and instructional strategies.

7th Grade Math

In grade 7, instructional time focuses on four critical areas of graphing and representing numbers: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples. All grade seven students will be exposed to each of these topics and will be prepared to take a rigorous 8th grade curriculum as well as assessments of these topics. The honors curriculum will investigate some topics in more depth with more emphasis on multi-step problem solving and synopsis of multiple theorems and formulas to solve complex problems. The pace of the grade seven mathematics program is adapted for the students to gain mastery of concepts. Projects in the past have included: Restaurant Menu, Gates Dance-a-Thon , Don't Give Up the Ship!, Stats Teacher for a Day, and the Globalization Project. Each of these projects have given students the opportunity to explore math topics as they apply to real life, while encouraging collaboration and exploration in other disciplines through project based learning.

8th Grade Math

In grade 8, instructional time focuses on three critical areas of functions and modeling: (1) formulating and

reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

All grade eight students will be exposed to each of these topics and will be prepared to take a rigorous algebra curriculum in high school. The honors curriculum will investigate some topics in more depth with more emphasis on multi-step problem solving and synopsis of multiple theorems and formulas to solve complex problems. The pace of the grade eight mathematics program is adapted for all students to gain mastery of concepts. Projects in the past have included: The Electoral College, Eratosthenes and Measuring the Circumference of the Earth, Graph-It Design Project and Line of Best Fit Project. Each of these projects have given students the opportunity to explore math topics as they apply to real life, while encouraging collaboration and exploration in other disciplines through project based learning.

RESEARCH MEDIA PROJECTS

Research Media Projects (Grades 7 and 8)

This project-based course gives students the skills and tools they need for evaluating a variety of online resources and working through the process for selecting quality information. Students analyze and synthesize information, while learning proper citation in the context of creating an informative presentation on a topic of their choice.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, and ENGINEERING

The middle school science and engineering program provides all students with an opportunity to develop the skills for engaging in scientific and technical reasoning that is critical to success in civic life, postsecondary education, and careers.

Grade 6: Students in grade 6 science will relate **structure and function** of the world around them at both a macroscopic and microscopic level. Students will use models and provide evidence to make claims and explanations about structure-function relationships. Content will be interdisciplinary in its approach by integrating concepts in Earth, Life and Physical Science. Topics will include the Earth-sun-moon system, geological processes, Earth's history, cellular structure and function in plants, animals, and bacteria, interactions of body systems, and properties of matter.

Grade 7: Students in grade 7 science focus on **systems and cycles**, building upon their knowledge of structures and functions from grade 6. Students apply concepts and skills from multiple scientific disciplines to build an understanding of the complexity of dynamic natural systems including plate tectonics, ecosystems, and the interactions between humans and Earth processes. This curriculum also begins to move students from concrete to more abstract scientific concepts that can't be directly observable, creating a foundation for grade 8 which will explore cause and effect.

Grade 8: In Grade 8 science, students will develop an understanding of the cause and effect of key natural phenomena. This will require students to use more abstract thinking and analyze evidence for processes that often cannot be seen. Students will be exposed to an interdisciplinary curriculum that uses concepts and skills from grade 6 and 7, and includes concepts from Earth, Physical, and Life Science. The 8th grade curriculum will include such topics as: weather patterns and ocean effects on weather and climate, global climate change, atomic theory, Newton's Laws of motion, the effect of the environment and genes on the growth of organisms, natural and artificial selection, and evolution.

Engineering Technology:

STEAM Lab Modeling: Design and modeling: Upon completion of this class students will be able to define the criteria and constraints of a design problem, and create solutions to the design problem. Students will be able to accurately apply scale and proportion to this design problem, and communicate their solution. They will also be able to select the appropriate materials and tools to be used given the design problem, and use specific concepts of **the design process** to develop their solution.

STEAM Lab Manufacturing: Design and manufacturing: Students in this STEAM Lab will be exposed to the principles of the Engineering Design Process that focus on **manufacturing and materials technologies**. Students will use the concepts of game design to explore a wide range of Engineering design problems and present information on how a product can be created using basic processes in manufacturing systems.

Grade 7 Engineering Basics: Students will continue to develop skills and expand upon knowledge learned in their Grade 6 STEAM lab courses. The central focus is on systems engineering with projects/study in communication, transportation, and structural systems as students learn about the interactions between and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of various subsystems.

Grade 8 Engineering: This course runs in conjunction with Grade 8 Tech as students complete a project that challenges them to learn and apply new skills such as computer programming, project planning, and manufacturing. They learn how to make connections between the physical and virtual worlds. During the 12-week project, students create prototypes of interactive exhibits to share information about a personal interest. They use the Scratch programming language to develop a computer program and a Makey Makey to connect to a controller that they construct from conductive and non-conductive materials.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

A school counselor is assigned to each grade of students. This counselor loops with the grade allowing them to work with a student throughout their time at Gates. School counselors provide services to students, parents, school staff and the community through direct and indirect services. Direct services include the delivery of school counseling curriculum to all students, individual student planning, and responsive services (individual or small group counseling and crisis intervention). Indirect services are provided on behalf of students and can include referrals to outside agencies or resources and consultation and/or collaboration with staff.

Thirty school counseling classes are provided to students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Classes in the 7th and 8th grade are embedded within the Wellness Block and are taught independently or collaboratively, with the Health Teacher. Classes in the 6th grade are taught independently by the school counselors throughout the year. The curriculum is aligned with the MA Model for School Counseling as well as the American School Counselor Association and covers the following domains: Academic, Personal/Social/Emotional Development and Career Exploration and Workplace Readiness. School Counselors utilize evidenced-based curriculum including *Second Step* and *Break Free From Depression*, to support their instruction.

Topics covered in Sixth Grade: Transitioning to Middle School, Growth Mindset, Habits of Successful Students, Goal Setting, Impulse Control, If-Then Plans, Understanding Emotions and Emotional Management, Managing Stress, Problem Solving.

Topics covered in Seventh Grade: Transitioning to Middle School, Becoming a Life Long Learner, Understanding Learning Styles, Study Skills, Working in Groups, Disagreeing Respectfully, Negotiation and Compromise, Giving and Getting Support, Understanding Anger, Staying in Control, Coping with Stress, Empathy, Effective Communication, Problem Solving.

Topics covered in Eighth Grade: Becoming a Life Long Learner, Working in Groups, Leaders and Allies, Handling Grievances, Negotiating and Compromise, De-escalating a Tense Situation, Coping with Stress, Goal Setting, Career Exploration, Identifying Depression and Getting Help, Transitioning to High School.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Overview

The goal of the Social Studies Department is to help young people become problem solving citizens by encouraging them to be curious, informed, tolerant, and thoughtful. In addition, we help students develop reading and note-taking skills, how to write and research, and how to present their ideas in front of a group. Finally, we strive to make our subject come alive by helping students to connect what they study to their own lives, their community, and to the broader world.

6th Grade Social Studies: World Geography and Ancient Civilizations I

Grades 6 and 7 form a two-year sequence in which students study regions of the world by examining physical geography, nations in the region today, and selected ancient and classical societies before 1000 CE.

Grade 6 students learn about regions of the world by examining physical geography alongside ancient and classical societies. Students investigate guiding questions such as “How does geography shape how societies develop and interact?” in units including Prehistoric Eras, The Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Ancient Greece and Rome. In studying these topics, students apply grade 6 reading, writing, and speaking and listening skills.

7th Grade Social Studies: World Geography and Ancient Civilizations II

This course is the second of a two-year sequence in which students study regions of the world by examining physical geography, nations in the region today, and selected ancient and classical societies before 1000 CE.

Grade 7 students study the geography of South and Central America, South and Southeast Asia and Oceania. Students explore guiding questions such as "How does culture impact daily life?" and consider the ways in which geography and history have shaped the economy and current events. In studying these topics, students apply grade 7 reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

8th Grade Social Studies: Government and Civic Life

Grade 8 students study the roots and foundations of U.S. democracy, how and why it has developed over time, and the role of individuals in maintaining a healthy democracy. They study these topics by exploring guiding questions such as, “How have concepts of liberty and justice affected the United States democratic system of government?” and “How can power be balanced in government?” In studying these topics, students apply grade 8 reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

A student with special needs is a child who has been determined eligible for special education through the team evaluation process. These students have a specific disability and are unable to progress effectively in the general curriculum without specially designed instruction and/or related services. The special education department develops individualized programs of instruction for the students identified with a wide range of special needs. Service options include those provided within a fully integrated program of regular education to placement in special education classes and are determined by the student’s Special Education Team and specified on the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

The focus of the special educational services can be described by the terms remediation, compensation, modification, and accommodation. The needs of Scituate students with special education plans are met through curricula modifications/accommodations, inclusion support, academic strategy support classes, and intensive skills programs. Students are placed in classes as specified in the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). The IEP specifies services that assist the student to progress in the general curriculum and the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks standards. Most all students with special educational needs participate in MCAS testing. Modifications/accommodations as determined by the special education team are provided. For our more significant needs students the option of a portfolio, or Alternative MCAS Portfolio, is considered and determined by the IEP Team.

Special Education Continuum of Services Include, but are not limited to:

Related Services Currently Provided to Eligible Students

For students with special education needs who also require related services, the district will provide or arrange for the provision of support services, which have been determined to be developmental or corrective in nature. The IEP Team has agreed that these services are required to assist the student in benefiting from special education support and /or to assist the student in accessing the general curriculum. Related services provided in the Scituate Public Schools include the following, but are not limited to:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Psychological Consultation – to the Team
- Therapeutic Interventions
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Early Identification/Intervention for Children with Disabilities
- Orientation and Mobility Training
- Teacher of the Visually Impaired consultation
- Parent Training
- Special Transportation
- Applied Behavior Analysis
- BCBA Consultation
- Assistive Technology consultation and devices as required
- Adapted Physical Education

Middle School Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is a model currently used in the Gates Middle School. When two teachers can serve a class, the needs of all learners can be met better. In this program children on IEPs who need support are integrated with children who are not on IEPs. Two classroom teachers, a general educator and a special educator, instruct the class. In this program students are provided with additional scaffolding and increased individualization due to the support of two teachers.

We also use the co-teaching model to provide ELA literacy and math literacy support.

Academic Strategies

The Academic Strategies program provides specialized instruction to eligible students who require varying degrees of skill development and academic support. The goal of Academic Strategies is to assist students to become independent learners in the regular education setting. Students are fully enrolled in mainstream classes and attend Academic Strategy sessions as a component of their schedule.

Students attending Academic Strategy sessions receive small group remedial instruction. The time spent in Academic Strategy sessions varies for each student. Areas of emphasis are reading comprehension, written expression, mathematics, and study skills such as note taking, outlining, report writing and test preparation.

As part of the Academic Strategy program special education staff offers support in many regular education classrooms. By participating in mainstream classrooms, Academic Strategy staff is better able to provide specific curriculum support in the Academic Strategy sessions.

Middle School Therapeutic Program

Students will work on individual academic and social/ emotional IEP goals. Academics will be based off the high school curriculum. The use of the natural setting in the high school and activities to reinforce the social and emotional skills of the students is implemented. The program staffing includes one special education teacher, one paraprofessional and one Therapeutic School Psychologist. The program will be for students in grades 6-8 who receive special education services related to an emotional or behavioral disability.

Middle School iAchieve Program

This program is staffed with one special education teacher. The students enrolled within this program are students for whom a possible Fifth Year of studies may be necessary to support them in receiving their high school diploma. Some of the students may be considered by the Team as vocationally bound along with receiving their academic classes with supports.

Gates Learning Center Program (GLC)

The Gates Learning Center services students within the district, grades 6-8, who present with severe special education needs. The program consists of one special education teacher and paraprofessionals to create 1:2 ratio of adult to students. Should a student require more intensive 1:1 supports, the IEP Team will make that recommendation. Typically, the ILC program feeds into the Gates Learning Center program.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The World Language Department offers courses in French, Mandarin and Spanish to sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. The three-year program introduces students of French, Mandarin and Spanish to the basic communication skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, combined with a strong focus on communication. The sixth grade classes focus on vocabulary development through communicative and interpersonal activities. In seventh and eighth grade, the fundamentals of grammar are presented in contextual situations as vocabulary is simultaneously developed. Oral participation in the language on a daily basis is required. Teachers and students strive to use the target language as much as possible within and beyond the classroom setting. Throughout each language sequence, students will develop an increased awareness and appreciation of the cultures studied as they make comparisons and connections between their own culture and that of the French-speaking, Chinese-speaking, and Spanish-speaking world.

When choosing a language, students will list their top choices. Every effort will be made to accommodate a student's first choice, but staffing constraints may result in some students receiving their second choice.

Students study the same language for three years in the middle school and are strongly encouraged to continue into the next level of that language at the high school. Although a student may change languages in ninth grade, it is recommended he/she continue with the same language for several years in order to achieve a confident grasp of that language which will prepare him/her well for future work, study, travel, and life in a global society.

Introduction to French- Novice Low (6th Grade)

The 6th grade courses are designed to expose students to an immersion type language experience where the focus is on communication and interpersonal skills. Students will develop the ability to communicate in the target language while also acquiring a strong vocabulary base for the 7th and 8th grade classes. The focus of this course is not on grammar. Students will participate in three units of study. The first unit is an introductory

and exploratory unit where students learn survival phrases to communicate in the French classroom, the French Alphabet, ways to greet and say goodbye, ways to ask for and give names, and ways to ask and answer how you are feeling. Students will explore the culture of France in this unit. Unit two, entitled “Describing My World,” explores colors, shapes and ways to describe one’s personality and physical description. The final unit for the course is called, “ My Likes and Dislikes” and explores ways to discuss what you like and don’t like and how to discuss what one does in their daily life.

Introduction to Mandarin-Novice Low (6th Grade)

The 6th grade courses are designed to expose students to an immersion type language experience where the focus is on communication and interpersonal skills. Students will develop the ability to communicate in the target language while also acquiring a strong vocabulary base for the 7th and 8th grade classes. The focus of this course is not on grammar. Students will participate in three units of study. The first unit is an introductory and exploratory unit where students learn survival phrases to communicate in the Mandarin classroom, some common characters, ways to greet and say goodbye, ways to ask for and give names, and ways to ask and answer how you are feeling. Students will explore the Mid- Autumn Festival. Unit two entitled , “All About Me” explores ways to discuss what you like and don’t like and how to discuss what one does in their daily life. This unit will explore Chinese New Year as well. In unit three students explore, “What makes me unique?”. They cover shapes, colors, animals and the Chinese Zodiac. In the final unit students learn how to talk about their town and the environment around them.

Introduction to Spanish-Novice Low (6th Grade)

The 6th grade courses are designed to expose students to an immersion type language experience where the focus is on communication and interpersonal skills. Students will develop the ability to communicate in the target language while also acquiring a strong vocabulary base for the 7th and 8th grade classes. The focus of this course is not on grammar. Students will participate in three units of study. The first unit is an introductory and exploratory unit where students learn survival phrases to communicate in the Spanish classroom, the Spanish Alphabet, ways to greet and say goodbye, ways to ask for and give names, and ways to ask and answer how you are feeling. Students will explore the culture of Spain in this unit. Unit two, entitled “Describing My World,” explores colors, shapes and ways to describe one’s personality and physical description. The final unit for the course is called, “ My Likes and Dislikes” and explores ways to discuss what you like and don’t like and how to discuss what one does in their daily life.

French 1A and 1B- Novice Low/Mid (7th and 8th Grade)

This course is designed to develop the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Using French almost exclusively, students are engaged in interactive exercises or assessments designed to foster good oral and written communication about their daily lives. The 21st-century skills of communication, creativity and collaboration are an integral part of the instructional delivery. Oral interviews, skits, demonstrations and role-playing constitute a vital part of the program. Students learn vocabulary for introductions, days, dates, times, describing people and things, talking about what people like to do, everyday activities, school life, restaurant and foods as well as shopping and travel. Present tense conjugations for regular and irregular verbs are emphasized so that students can master narration in the present tense. Students will also begin to learn past tense conjugations. In addition, students will discuss and compare with American customs information acquired about daily life, geography, and holiday celebrations in France, Québec, and Sénégal.

Each student will participate in at least one project-based learning experience during this full-year course. Students in 8th grade work collaboratively to prepare online resources for French visitors. They design a food blog for students participating in the French Exchange and visiting Scituate from Sucy en Brie, France. The blogs contain restaurant descriptions and recipes of favorite American dishes. Students also create welcome brochures for French visitors. The brochures include and describe Scituate points of interest, beaches, restaurants, (including directions, hours of operation, and means of transportation).

Mandarin 1A and IB-Novice Low/Mid (7th and 8th Grade)

The Mandarin IA and IB courses introduce the student to the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Using Mandarin almost exclusively, students are engaged in interactive exercises or assessments designed to foster good oral and written communication about their daily lives. The 21st-century skills of communication, creativity and collaboration are an integral part of the instructional delivery. Oral interviews, skits, demonstrations and role-playing constitute a vital part of the program. Students will learn Pinyin (the phonetic system), and simplified character formation, simple sentence structures and pronunciation and tones. Students cover topics such as greetings and goodbyes, dates and times, ways to describe themselves, their families and their schools. Students will also explore the culture of China through units on Yao Ming and the Chinese New Year.

Each student will participate in at least one project-based learning experience. In 7th grade the PBL unit involves story-telling skills and the creation of stories.

Spanish 1A and 1B-Novice Low/Mid (7th and 8th Grade)

This course is designed to develop the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening in the target language. Using Spanish almost exclusively, students are engaged in interactive exercises or assessments designed to foster good oral and written communication about their daily lives. The 21st-century skills of communication, creativity and collaboration are an integral part of the instructional delivery. Oral interviews, skits, demonstrations and role-playing constitute a vital part of the program. Students learn vocabulary for “Mi Dia en la Escuela” where school subjects, classes and schedules are discussed in the target language. In addition, they learn vocabulary for hobbies, likes and dislikes, weather and places in unit two, “Quieres ir conmigo?” The unit entitled, “Mi Familia” presents vocabulary for talking about families and houses. The 8th grade course develops vocabulary thematically as well and explores food and restaurants, shopping, travel and vacations. Present tense conjugations for regular and irregular verbs are emphasized so that students can master narration in the present tense. Students will also begin to learn past tense conjugations. In addition, students will discuss and compare with American customs information acquired about daily life, geography, and holiday celebrations in various Spanish-speaking countries.

Each student will participate in one project-based learning experience in 7th grade and one project-based learning experience in 8th grade. In 7th grade students will create children's books for children in El Salvador. They will work with the art department to learn how to make books and bind them. In 8th grade students will work in teams to design a menu and commercial for a Mexican Restaurant. Students will combine Spanish skills with technology in this learning experience. They will learn to storyboard commercials and film using a green screen.