

FROLIO MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF STUDIES
2007-2008

Dear Students and Parents:

The Program of Studies reflects the current curriculum being delivered at Frolio Middle School. Revisions that have taken place in our description of the curriculum are a function of the Massachusetts Department of Education's initiative to raise academic standards for all students. The department directors and faculty of the Abington Public Schools are committed to the process of aligning our educational program to the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks and the goals of the Common Core of Learning.

The faculty, staff and administration of Frolio Middle School are dedicated to meeting the unique needs of middle school students. Working with the community and other resources, we endeavor to provide a program that is designed to transition students from the elementary level to the high school. We recognize that this time, in your child's life, is characterized as a mile marker where there is much personal growth and dramatic change. We pay careful attention to transition issues, personalizing the educational experience is a key to success with adolescents. Our "middle school" philosophy organizes the students onto teams of learners. Teaming provides the framework for interdisciplinary instruction, teacher collaboration and strong parent school communication. When learning has a purpose and a unified focus, the students bring a natural enthusiasm to their search for knowledge.

The School Committee reserves the right to limit the amount of available program due to limitations of facilities, staffing, enrollment and/or budget. If you have any questions during the scheduling process, please call our guidance office at 781-982-2172.

It is the policy of the Abington Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age or handicap in its educational programs, services, activities or employment practices as required by Chapter 151B of the General Laws; Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971; Title IX of the State 1972 Educational Amendments; and Section 504 of the rehabilitation Act of 1973.

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT LEVELS

At the middle school, unless otherwise described in individual program areas, students are placed in either level one or level two classes. Generally, level one or two designates the expectation of requirements of the students unless otherwise stated in the course descriptions that follow. The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks guide the instruction, in all academic areas. Level one and level two classes follow the exact same curriculum unless otherwise noted in the Program of Studies.

The levels are as follows:

Level I Same curriculum as Level II courses. The class is designed to meet the needs of the more independent learner who has consistently demonstrated outstanding ability and motivation, coupled with strong organizational skills.

Level II Same curriculum as Level I courses. This class is designed to meet the needs of students through the use of additional instructional supports. In addition, students will benefit from teaching techniques which improve independence and organization.

CHANGING LEVELS

It is not advisable to make changes until the mid-point of the first trimester. If you or your child feel a change of level is needed, you should follow these steps:

1. Discuss your desire to change levels with your child's teacher or teachers to determine if they agree that a change is in the best interest of the student. You may proceed to step two regardless of the recommendation if you desire.
2. Contact the middle school guidance office at 781- 982-2172 and discuss the change. After a careful review and assessment of all available information, the guidance office, in consultation with the teachers, will make a recommendation on the student's placement.
3. If you are not satisfied with the recommendation, an appeal may be made to the principal.

Please note, in many cases, the fact that a child is failing coursework may not indicate the need for a level change. Furthermore, many teachers will not recommend a change to a lower level if the student hasn't completed his/her assignments. Parents should, whenever possible, meet with the teachers to discuss changes.

Guidance services are available at Frolio Middle School to help students maximize their potential for academic and personal growth. Students and parents are encouraged to utilize services on an as needed basis in order to accomplish this goal.

EDUCATIONAL

- Educational counseling is typically done on an individual basis and focuses on helping students adjust to middle school and meet the increased academic demands.
- Educational counseling can be initiated by students, teachers, counselors or parents.
- An individual cumulative folder for each student is kept which contains current and past records of achievement.
- All courses offered at Abington High School will be explained to eighth grade students by the guidance counselor. Teachers in major subject areas will enter a course level recommendation on the student's course selection sheet. Course selections for high school will be reviewed by the counselor and by parents.
- Applications to private high schools and to South Shore Vocational Technical High School will be processed, records sent and a tour of South Shore Vocational Technical High School conducted.

- PCC Summer Enrichment Program will be explained to all grade 8 students and applications to the program processed.
- The guidance program for grade 6 students centers around the transition to middle school with an emphasis on providing information about what to expect and addressing any student concerns about middle school. Activities include counselor presentation of slides of Frolio Middle School, presentations by Frolio students, a tour of Frolio and parent evening for parents of sixth graders.
- Conferences and telephone calls with parents are encouraged. (781-982-2172)

CAREER

Career exploration is accomplished by a series of group presentations, integrated into the student's academic program. Students will complete a Career Targets program where they will take a career interest test and research their highest scoring careers. Career discussions and goal-setting sessions with the guidance counselor are available to all students. In addition, the Department of Education sets application deadlines so that the Superintendents will know the amount of nonresident tuition the city or town must pay prior to final preparation of the budget for the next school year. This includes nonresident tuition applications for secondary and post-secondary Chapter 74 vocational technical education programs such as Norfolk County Agricultural High School. The nonresident applications must be presented to the Superintendent of Schools in the city or town of residence by April 1, of the year preceding enrollment. Therefore, parents and students should notify the guidance department by March 15, of their Chapter 74 vocational nonresident application so that the submission will be ready for April 1.

PERSONAL

Short term personal counseling is provided on an as needed basis. Counseling can be initiated by student, parent, teacher or administrator request. The counselor works with problems that fall within the normal adolescent range. When a problem of greater magnitude surfaces, counselors attempt to make appropriate referrals as soon as possible. Outside professionals are recommended.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

COMPUTER

Computers are used every day in business, government and education. In order to prepare students to succeed in high school and beyond, the computer program at Frolio Middle School has two purposes:

1. To teach essentials skills in the operation of the computer and computer software;
2. To use these skills as tools of academic practice in the core curriculum.

Presently, the grade 7 computer curriculum consists of 60 classes per year. These classes consist of the operation of the operating system Windows XP, keyboarding, Power Point, word processing (Microsoft Word), use of the Internet and real world projects using these tools. The grade eight course consists of ninety classes. Topics include advanced keyboarding, spreadsheets (Microsoft Excel), database management systems (Microsoft Access), graphics unit (Microsoft Publisher, Paint) if time permits, and real world projects using these tools.

ENGLISH

English courses are designed to give students the opportunity to develop the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in a literature-based, integrated language arts program. Our goal is to support students on their way to more effective language use and greater appreciation. Students will learn to use language to:

- gain information
- discover meaning
- understand logical relationships and make judgments
- speak, write and solve problems creatively;
- communicate emotions, ideas, opinions, values, experiences and information.

All courses in the English department will continue to reflect the Massachusetts State Frameworks for Reasoning and Thinking in the English Language Arts. The writing process will be a prominent feature of the curriculum at every grade and level, especially as mandated testing requires that students respond in writing to open-ended questions and long compositions. Students will learn to pre-write, draft, revise, edit, publish and reflectively self-assess written work which will include narratives, essays and creative writing.

Students will focus on specific issues of mechanics, content, organization and style appropriate to grade and level. Grammar topics will emerge from student papers; direct instruction in grammar will occur as needed. The English department has adopted the Collins writing program as a means of assigning and assessing writing, as have all departments at the Frolio Middle School. The study of literature will be prominent in each English course so students may come to understand our literary heritage and appreciate the artistry of the spoken and written word. Vocabulary lessons will emerge from the literature students read. All English courses will emphasize development of the questioning and listening skills necessary for participation in discussions. It is important for students to learn to answer questions; however, it is as important for them to learn to ask questions in order to increase their understanding.

GRADE 7 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The units of literature studied at this grade include a range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama that explores topics of identity, adolescence and emerging adulthood. All students will read full length novels, as a class and independently. The story-telling traditions of a variety of world cultures are also studied.

Students will learn to write about both literature and their own experiences. The composition strand of this course includes a special focus on writing the expository essay which is the MCAS task for testing at Grade 7. All students will be formally introduced to the research process, including MLA documentation.

GRADE 8 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The units of literature at this grade include a range of American and multicultural fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama that continues to explore topics of identity, adolescence and emerging adulthood in a more sophisticated way. All students will read full length novels, both young adult and classic selections.

The story-telling traditions of the American experience are also studied. Students will learn to write about both literature and their own experiences.

The composition strand of this course includes a special focus on analyzing various kinds of literature independently. This kind of assignment begins preparation for the long composition in the Grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts section. All students will continue to conduct research projects using MLA documentation.

HEALTH

The goal of this course is to continue the efforts begun in the earlier grades to promote the health and well-being of our students and to help them make wise and informed decisions during their teenage years and beyond. The information is presented in both a factual and age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy is respected and the material is discussed in a way that makes it clear that people may have strong religious and moral beliefs about certain issues and that those beliefs must be respected.

The seventh grade course includes topics such as drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nutrition, self-esteem, peer pressure, conflict resolution, weight control and first aid. Discussions on adolescent growth and development include the male and female reproductive systems, the changes of puberty, HIV, AIDS, dating and abstinence. The eighth grade course includes units dealing with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, self-esteem, nutrition, media influence, relationships, recognizing abuse, eating disorders, HIV, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy.

Under Massachusetts Law and School Committee Policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexuality issues. To receive an exemption for your child, send a letter to the principal with this request. No student who is exempted will be penalized. An alternative assignment will be provided for them.

MATHEMATICS

Both seventh and eighth grade math curricula engage students in the development of the five general goals of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. According to the NCTM all students should:

1. Learn the value of mathematics
2. Become confident in their ability
3. Become math problem solvers
4. Learn to communicate mathematics
5. Learn to reason mathematically

In order to achieve the goals of the math program we have incorporated various strategies in our instruction at all levels. Writing responses to open ended questions, working with manipulatives, working in cooperative groups, assessing student work authentically and enhancing discourse in the learning environment are all included in mathematical instruction. The focus in our mathematics program is to strengthen problem solving skills in an environment that is motivating and thus more effective.

GRADE 7

The main goal of grade 7 mathematics is to provide a curriculum that prepares students to meet the challenge of the Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks. The program is designed to enhance the students' skills in problem solving and communication of mathematics with an emphasis on reasoning. The objective in the seventh grade is to create the fundamental blocks for Algebra and Geometry. The mathematics department strives to have students explore and make discoveries around patterns and relations, measurement, number and number relationships, number systems and theories as well as enhancing their skill in estimation, computation, as well as in ratio, proportions and percents.

MATH APPLICATIONS (Grade 7)

This course is designed to help the student with both math content and strategies for success on the Mathematics MCAS exam. The focus will be on both geometry and measurement as well as probability and statistics. The course is taught through investigations and experiments in which students discover relationships about mathematics. This course will help students to reason, communicate, and make connections about mathematics.

GRADE 8

PRE-ALGEBRA

The grade 8 program of studies reinforces and expands upon the curriculum development to meet the standards outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The main focus of Pre-Algebra is to build on the fundamentals of Algebra and Geometry previously mastered in grade 7. Students will expand their knowledge of topics that were studied in grade 7. Students will discover the rules of Algebra and apply them to real world situations. They will also see an integration between the geometry learned in grade 7 and the newly learned basis for Algebra. Pre-Algebra is rich in topics such as analyzing and extending patterns, applications of number theory concepts, identifying the properties of operations of integers and rational numbers as well as geometric constructions. The study of probability and statistics are also intensified in the Pre-Algebra course.

ALGEBRA

Algebra I is offered in place of Pre-Algebra to those students who have excelled in grade 7 mathematics, who have successfully completed an Algebra readiness test as well as been recommended by their grade 7 teacher. This course is equivalent to taking Algebra I Level I at the High School. In this course students will transform polynomials, solve by graphing, solve systems of equations, describe the families of linear, quadratic and exponential functions as well as to solve problems involving direct and inverse variation. This course is extremely rigorous and places a strong emphasis on homework.

MATH APPLICATIONS (Grade 8)

This course is an extension of the grade seven MCAS prep course and is designed to help the student with both math content and strategies for success on the Mathematics MCAS exam. The focus will be on both algebraic relationship and geometry. The course is taught through investigations and experiments in which students discover relationships about mathematics. This course will help students to reason, communicate, and make connections about mathematics. An emphasis will be placed on strategies as well as test taking techniques.

MUSIC

All students study music at Frolio Middle School through their participation in **Band, Chorus, or Music Class**. The selection is made by both students and parents toward the end of grade 6 and there is opportunity to make individual adjustment between grade 7 and grade 8. Band and Chorus are open to students who already have skills in playing an instrument or singing and those interested in developing those skills.

Students learn to read and write music and are engaged in the process of creating music. Students play, sing, perform and listen to a variety of musical styles including but not limited to Classical, Jazz, Rock, Popular, Marches, Spirituals and music from other cultures. Students learn about composers and musical works within a cultural and historical context. The Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks were closely studied in the development of the Frolio Middle School Music Curriculum. Musical studies at Frolio Middle School will require practice, creative thinking and collaborative work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All middle school students will take physical education for a portion of the school year in grade 7 and grade 8. The emphasis of the physical education program will be on the acquisition of fitness and skill components through practice and participation in individual, dual and team sports such as; Soccer, Lacrosse, Team Handball, Basketball, Floor Hockey, Volleyball, Badminton, Fitness, Weight Training, New Games, Step Aerobics, Track and Field, Ping Pong, Softball, Orienteering and Wrestling/Combatives. Concepts regarding the improvement of personal fitness as well as knowledge of the rules and strategies of play will be taught. Units of instruction for these activities are typically six classes. Participation in several of these activities, as well as others not listed, are offered by way of the after school intramural program which is held twice a week.

READING

The grade 7 reading course explores utilizing effective study strategies and reading skills in the various content areas. Emphasis is placed on reading for meaning, outlining, note taking, mapping and active listening skills. Students will learn study skill strategies, test preparation skills and eventually develop an individualized study plan based on their own learning style. This plan will consist of an array of tools that can be used across the disciplines.

SCIENCE

In grade 7 and 8 the science program is a continuation of the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill series presented in grades K-6. The series presents science concepts to investigate through inquiry and exploration via project based investigation and discussion. Emphasis is placed on developing a foundation of understanding that can then be connected between related science concepts, and then develops links to other subject areas such as math, technology, social studies and language arts. This philosophy enables the students to view the science content presented in class in relation to the world around them. The science objectives reflect the Learning Standards in the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

Grade 7 students will explore the diversity and changes in areas related to biology, ecology, oceanography and astronomy.

Grade 8 students will explore the diversity and changes in areas related to geology, chemistry, energy and physics.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies Curriculum reflects the guidelines established by the Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks. Social Studies programs integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes within and across disciplines in order to provide students with citizenship skills, an appreciation for democratic values and the awareness of cultural differences that they need in order to make informed and reasonable decisions as citizens of a democratic society.

Social Studies teachers utilize a wide variety of instructional methods and assessment techniques that are intended to reinforce fundamental social studies skills such as map reading, organization and historical research. Social Studies classes are student-centered and engaging; challenging students to actively contribute to their schools, community and society.

GRADE 7 - WORLD GEOGRAPHY

Students entering the Frolio Middle School will follow a course of study focusing on World Geography as outlined in the Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks. That course of study will include physical geography, the climates, the cultures and brief histories of countries around the globe. The World Geography course is a political and cultural geography course organized around the five themes of geography and the eight traits of culture: government, social groups, language, religion, daily life, history, economy and the arts.

GRADE 8 - UNITED STATES HISTORY

This course will follow the development of our nation from the exploration of the New World to the early 1800's. Students will examine the political, social and cultural trends that defined our new nation. Emphasis will be placed upon reinforcing writing skills and encouraging the critical thinking skills needed to be informed citizens. The course is designed to foster an appreciation of our democratic heritage and increase students' understanding of the historical foundations that have shaped our nation's destiny.

CRITICAL THINKING AND DESIGN

The Technology Education Program provides students with exciting hands-on experiences and applications in the foundations of engineering, math and science. The science and engineering inquiry driven model makes strong supportive connections to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in both seventh and eighth grade courses. The students will work independently and in teams to complete physically tangible projects and explore technological systems and have relevant real world connections. Computer models, engineering questions, interactive software, 3-dimensional models and Internet research will assist students through the problem solving and design process. Students will also acquire basic skill in the safe handling of materials and tools.

GRADE 7 - Students will explore the evolution of technology and gain an understanding of its impact on society. Additionally the system model is introduced and the five areas of technology are reviewed. Students will complete several hands-on projects focusing their learning on the "Engineering Design Process", Construction Technology, Manufacturing Technology, Transportation Technology and creative problem solving. Balsa wood towers, balsa wood and paper gliders, paper shoes and catapults are just some of the hands-on projects the students will complete.

GRADE 8 - Students will begin the term exploring the "Problem Solving Process" and will complete lessons utilizing the "Engineering Design Process". Independent and group research projects will aid in the completion of several hands-on activities that will explore Construction, Transportation, Communication and Manufacturing systems. Additionally students will be assigned two long term homework projects. Balsa wood bridges, package design, mechanical drawing and tetrahedral kites are just some of the hand-on projects that the students will complete.

VISUAL ART PROGRAM

The aim of the art program at Frolio Middle School is to have students learn to think creatively and to further discover things about themselves and the worlds of ideas, humankind and nature. Building on the established base of knowledge and experience in the elementary art program, the junior high art program adds increasingly more complex learning encounters that address the interests and needs of a young adolescent. At this stage students become more deliberate in the making of art and their art works often progress through a series of developmental stages of review and refinement with, if desired, a greater sense of realism. Students are instructed to be perceptually sensitive and creative. They progress to use tools and materials which require more skill, knowledge and discipline and begin to explore approaches and techniques used by professional artists.

The art curriculum for both the seventh and eighth grade is the exploration of a series of themes through a variety of art forms including drawing, colored drawing, painting, printmaking, collage and mixed media, sculpture, graphics and architecture. Different artists, styles, periods and cultures are used as reference for the study of these themes, which often connect content with other subjects in a cross disciplinary manner. The curriculum addresses the visual arts learning standards set forth in the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Frameworks. There are ten or more art making assignments scheduled each trimester.

All middle school students are required to take art for one trimester, three days in a six day cycle for 48 minutes each period. Writing assignments, homework and outside assignments are given. There is an art room in the middle school. Art work is exhibited in the art room and also on the bulletin board in the cafeteria and various sites in the community. After completing the middle school art program students can continue to elect art classes at the high school.

GRADE 7 - VISUAL ART

Students in grade 7 work on individual and cooperative art projects designed to develop independent creative thinking and ideas, observational abilities, and the visual art language. Diverse themes that can be looked at in different ways are explored using a variety of materials and approaches. A visual journal is also assigned for drawing and writing. A wide variety of artists and cultures are studied for references to art projects and for students to better understand the important role the visual arts play in our image rich culture.

GRADE 8 - VISUAL ART

Students in grade 8 work on creative art projects that are more complex and take longer to complete. More advanced observational skills are emphasized depicting a variety of subjects requiring more personal interpretation. A visual journal is also assigned for drawing and writing. The connections between visual art and other subjects are explored. The history of art is introduced through the study of art work from many cultures of the past and present.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

GRADE 7 -INTRODUCTION TO FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The introduction to Foreign Languages course provides students the opportunity to explore and appreciate the languages and cultures of the French and Spanish speaking worlds. At this level, meaningful communication will be stressed through the expression of greetings, introductions, likes and dislikes, descriptions, and asking and responding to simple yes/no and informational questions. Oral work and a conversational approach will be emphasized to connect the learning of Foreign Languages with other areas of the middle school curriculum.

GRADE 8 -FRENCH I

The French I program strengthens the student's knowledge of spoken French in order to exchange information, socialize, express feelings, emotions, attitudes and opinions and to persuade others. The cultural components in French I include information about Paris and the provinces, Quebec, Martinique and the Ivory Coast of Africa. Students are taught the linguistic survival skills needed to communicate in a French cultural setting and to become aware of similarities and differences between French and English. The grade 8 study for French is designed as the foundation for further study at the high school

GRADE 8 - SPANISH I

Language themes in Spanish I include friendship, school, sports, family, food, clothing, health, home and community. Cultural components focus on Spanish speaking countries, Hispanic communities in the U.S., leisure activities, formal and informal situations, meals and mealtimes, shopping and leisure and vacation time. The emphasis on learning strategies and language as a process will help students achieve the state and national standards of communicating, culture, connecting and participating. The grade 8 study of Spanish is designed as the foundation for further study at the high school.