



Middletown Township Public Schools

Thorne Middle School
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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Many of our families have requested guidelines in order to plan for Middle School and High School coursework. Below and attached, you will find the processes followed for Middle School Honors, Middle School Course Selection and High School Course Selection.

Middle School Honors Process

LANGUAGE ARTS:

Eligibility for Honors is offered to students beginning in March of the 6th Grade School Year.

In order to be considered for the Honors Language Arts program in Grades 7 through 9, students must complete certain requirements, as follows:

- **Self-Selection** –
 - Students Must Apply for Honors through their Guidance Counselors.
 - They must complete a letter of application to be completed in school and read by the professional staff.
 - They must Obtain Parental Permission in order to be considered for the Honors Language Arts Program;
- **NJ ASK Test Scores** - Students must achieve "Advanced Proficient" Scores on the NJ ASK Language Arts Literacy Test;
- **Teacher Recommendation** - Students must receive a recommendation for Honors from their Language Arts Teacher;
- **Grades** - Students must maintain grades of "B" or better in all subject areas;
- **Writing Sample** - Students must complete a writing sample to be completed in school and scored by professional staff;

Your child will be advised of the dates for these various requirements by their Guidance Counselors. Once the requirements have been met and evaluated, your child's counselor will advise you of his/her initial eligibility. All students *must maintain good grades in marking periods 3 and 4*. Both you and your child will then

be asked to sign a letter of understanding outlining specific requirements of the courses.

MATHEMATICS: Complete details on our Math Curriculum, including the selection processes used for advanced Middle School coursework, are as follows:

The mathematics curriculum at the middle school level reflects both the national standards from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards as well as incorporating some of the standards from the Common Core Standards adopted by the state of New Jersey in 2010 and required for implementation at the middle school level in September 2013. More than ever before, the district is making a concerted effort to teach for understanding and to ensure that:

- Problem situations serve as the context for mathematics.
- Communication with and about mathematics and mathematical reasoning permeate the curriculum
- Connections are made among the topics taught to help students achieve a deeper understanding of them.
- Technology (calculators, graphing calculators, videos, etc.) is integral to the curriculum and used appropriately.
- Learning is engaging to the students so as to help them become active learners.
- Classroom activities provide students with the opportunity to work individually and in groups.
- Resource materials including real-life data and manipulatives are used in problem solving and explorations as appropriate.

The curriculum includes grade level appropriate content in number sense and numerical operations, estimation, geometry, measurement, patterns and algebra, data analysis, probability, and discrete mathematics. Students are given experience with open-ended problems on a regular basis.

Math 6 The math curriculum in sixth grade includes the number system, geometry, ratio and proportion, and introduces pre-algebraic expressions and equations and statistics.

Math 7 In seventh grade, applications with numbers are reinforced from sixth grade and extended to include further work with rational numbers and integers as well as with ratio and proportion and percents. Work with three-dimensional geometry is also extended and two-dimensional geometry is reinforced. Pre-algebra is extended to further reinforce expressions and equations and to introduce inequalities and additional concepts in statistics as well as in probability are introduced.

Math 7/8 This course for seventh graders accelerates through both the 7th and 8th grade math curriculum in order to provide a smooth transition to algebra for those students who are determined to be ready to handle this level of work and more abstract thinking. Students are selected for this course based on standardized tests in math and reading, marking period grades, and teacher recommendation based on the student having demonstrated the necessary level of understanding.

Pre-algebra This course for eighth graders involves work with number concepts that is reinforced from previous grades as well as introducing irrational numbers and extending geometry to include concepts such as congruence and similarity. The algebraic concepts of equations and expressions are reinforced and extended to introduce systems of equations and nonlinear functions. Additional topics from statistics are studied and may include scatter plots and frequency tables.

Algebra I This course provides a more formal instruction to the techniques of elementary algebra and its logical structure. It emphasizes algebra as a means of representation (in translating quantitative relations to equations, tables, or graphs) and algebraic methods of problem solving using both pencil-and-paper exercises and activities involving the graphing calculator. Topics included are: properties of real numbers, solving linear equations, graphing linear equations and their functions, writing linear equations, solving and graphing linear inequalities, systems of linear equations and inequalities, exponents and exponential functions, quadratic equations and functions, polynomials and factoring, rational equations and functions, and radicals and connections to geometry.

Selected seventh graders will be given a cognitive abilities test and an algebra diagnostic test during the third marking period. This data in addition to performance on district standardized tests in reading and mathematics, marking period grades, and teacher recommendation will be used to determine placement of students in Algebra I in grade eight. Students who qualify for this course are notified normally during the first week of June. A minimum grade of B in Algebra I is required by the high school to be considered for placement in the honors math/science program in ninth grade.

For further information on all course selections, please refer to the attached guides for Middle and High School.