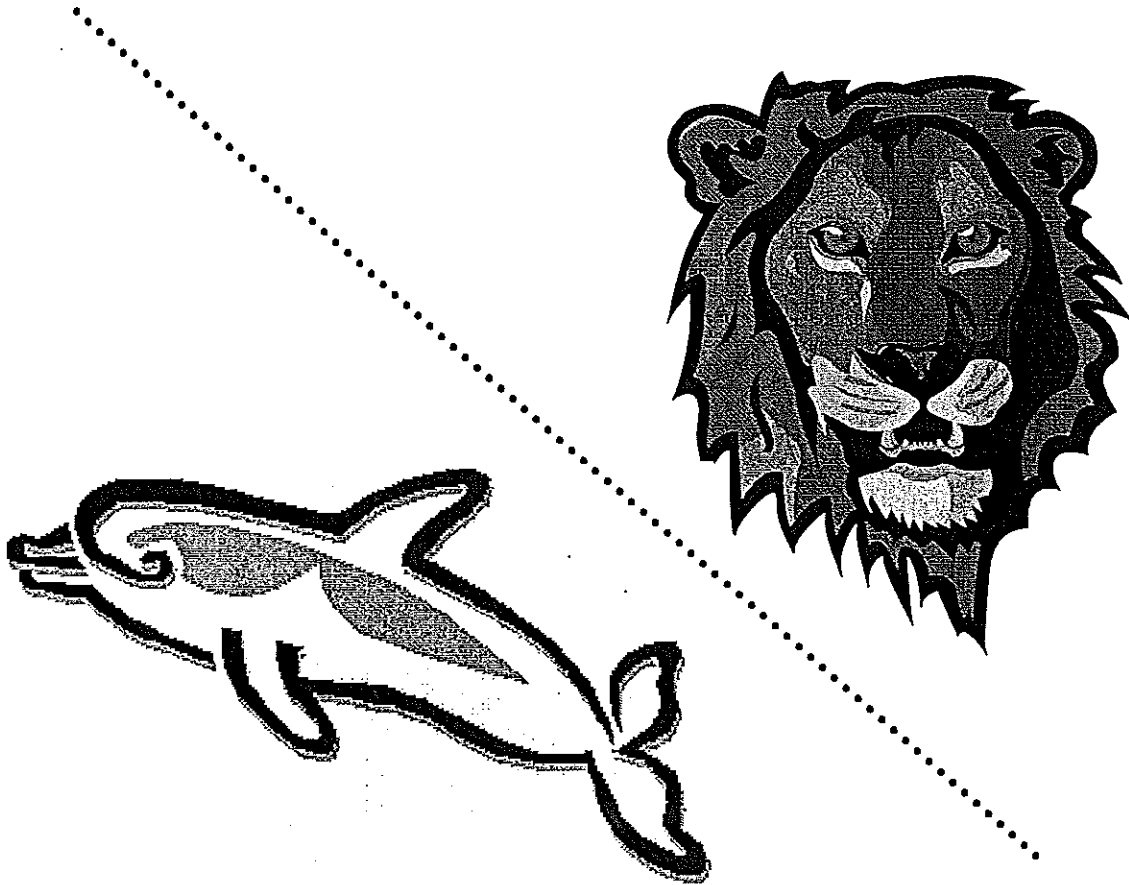


Middletown Township Public Schools Middle School Course Selection Guide



In order to prepare our students for the ever-increasing demand for a literate, technology-oriented work force, Middletown Township Public School District embraces an instructional philosophy that is student-centered, inquiry-based, and that differentiates instruction based on students' individual abilities.

Teachers, as facilitators of lifelong learning, challenge students by providing an environment in which the students become active participants engaged in working together on projects and in solving problems that involve or simulate authentic data and events.

Students learn to value a variety of different approaches and are taught to take responsibility for their own meaningful learning as they become more adept at communicating their reasoning and in asking questions to help clarify their thinking and that of their classmates.

Bayshore

Thompson

Thorne

2012 – 2013

MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Emerging adolescents have special characteristics and needs that identify them as a unique group. The middle school will provide a balanced program and environment to meet these needs in terms of learning styles and social development, and will provide for individual differences. Students will be encouraged to be independent and self-directed, not only through classroom instruction, but also by guidance counseling, a choice of extra-curricular activities, and leadership opportunities appropriate for this age. The result will be a school sensitive to the needs of students in this period of change in their lives, an articulated program to facilitate a smooth transition from elementary to high school, and opportunities to develop their potential.

The middle school's uniqueness is not primarily that of the organization of courses, grouping, schedules, staffing, or materials; it is a matter of the focus and spirit of the whole operation and a strong instructional program.

Each student will be encouraged to recognize his/her capacity for achievement, to develop a positive self-concept, and to grow in self-discipline and social consciousness. Beyond providing academic, social, and living skills, the curriculum will seek to develop an appreciation of the ongoing quality of all learning experiences.

We hope the implementation of this philosophy will challenge our children to reach their greatest potential so they will become productive, creative, responsible members of society in a changing world.

MIDDLE SCHOOL GOALS

The following goals, not in priority order, support the philosophy statement:

- Provide a middle school experience which will nurture and promote a positive self-concept and self-discipline.
- Provide a strong and balanced comprehensive program which includes the following: basic communicative, mathematical, physical fitness and study skills competencies; growth in creativity through exploration and a variety of learning experiences.
- Provide specific programs needed by teachers to meet the needs of learners and emphasize an effective middle school.
- Provide enrichment and advisory programs to assist learners in their quest for personal identity and self-expression and to prepare them to make appropriate educational, career, consumer and recreational decisions in the future.
- Provide experiences designed to develop attitudes and beliefs necessary for functioning as part of a democratic society.
- Provide processes whereby learners receive multiple services designed to enable them to make the transition from the elementary to the secondary school as well as from childhood to adolescence.
- Provide experiences designed to develop skills in interpersonal relationships.
- Provide a balance of stimulating and enriching programs and support systems for ALL students.
- Provide a structure for ongoing communication between the home and school.
- Provide opportunities for the development of problem-solving and critical thinking skills and an awareness of information technologies.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The program for all students at the middle school level consists of the five core subjects: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Language. In addition, students take Physical Education and Health, Computers, and elective choices.

Placement in the Middle School Academic Assistance Program is determined using multiple criteria including teacher recommendation and student performance on the statewide assessments. Academic Assistance services are individualized. The program promotes an inclusive model of instruction, whereby students receive academic support within the content area classroom.

The NJ ASK (Assessment of Skills and Knowledge) is taken by all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. All courses are continually reviewed to ensure that the skills and knowledge required by these assessments are included in the curriculum. Students who do not meet the levels of proficiency set by the State may have remedial coursework at the high school level. The 11th grade HSPA (High School Proficiency Assessment), Biology Competency Test and End of Course Algebra I assessments are requirements for high school graduation.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS - 2012-2013

SIXTH GRADE COURSES

Language Arts (2 periods)
Mathematics (1½ periods)
Science (Integrated Earth / Life / Physical) (Double Period Every Other Day)
Social Studies – World History (Double Period Every Other Day)
World Languages – ½ year French or ½ year Spanish (Alternates Every Other Day with Math)
Physical Education (½ year) / Health (¼ year) / Computers (¼ year)

One Elective:

Band (full year), or
Chorus (full year), or
Exploratory Cycle (¼ year each):
 Art Appreciation
 Music Appreciation
 Family and Consumer Science (“I’m in Charge”)
 Contemporary Issues and Current Events

SEVENTH GRADE COURSES

Language Arts (2 periods)
Mathematics (1½ periods)
Science (Integrated Earth / Life / Physical) (Double Period Every Other Day)
Social Studies – U. S. History (Double Period Every Other Day)
World Language -- either full year French I, full year Spanish I, half year Elements of French, or half year Elements of Spanish
Physical Education (½ year) / Health (¼ year) / Computers (¼ year)
Elective options: ½ year (alternating days with math class): Band OR Chorus OR

Art 7 (¼ yr) & Intro to Video Production – gr. 7 (¼ yr)
½ year (only with ½ year World Language): Team Problem Solving 7 (¼ yr) & Theater 7 (¼ yr)

EIGHTH GRADE COURSES

Language Arts (2 periods)
Mathematics (1½ periods)
Science (Integrated Earth / Life / Physical) (Double Period Every Other Day)
Social Studies – US History and Civics (Double Period Every Other Day)
World Language – either full year French II, full year Spanish II, half year Elements of French, or half year Elements of Spanish
Physical Education (½ year) / Health (¼ year) / Computers (¼ year)

Elective options: ½ year (alternating days with math class): Band OR Chorus OR
 Art 8 (¼ year) & Drama 8 (¼ year)
½ year (only with ½ year World Language): Intro to Video Production - gr. 8 (¼ yr)
and Applied Arts 8 (¼ yr)

* Please note that students who do not attain proficiency on the NJASK may be placed in a test preparation elective for all or part of the school year.

INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS AND SOCIAL STUDIES

The middle school Humanities program of Integrated Language Arts and Social Studies adheres to the latest national research that prescribes an interdisciplinary approach. Novels and readings align to historical periods and movements to a great extent. For example, when studying ancient Greece in social studies, students read novels and short stories on Greek mythology. Big ideas and themes are explored in both content areas such as heroes and the foundations of democracy and how these concepts translate to life today in twenty-first century United States. In addition, connections are made to the science curriculum whenever possible. Curriculum is designed around "Driving Questions" that require students to explore a big idea in detail and then report out or develop a "project based-learning" marking period final presentation in writing and through multimedia tools.

All students are required to read at least twelve novels a year as well as many additional core readings and do an in-depth author study at each grade level. Honors Language Arts students are expected to read at least fifteen novels. A wide range of reading materials in various genres is explored. Each student will participate in the process of creating an individual writing portfolio that will reflect his/her performance and encourage him/her to reflect upon, analyze, and assess his/her own growth and thinking. The portfolio will be started when the student enters sixth grade and will be sent home with the student at the end of grade eight. In order to qualify for 7th and 8th grade Honors ILA, students will need to submit a letter of intent, a writing sample from their portfolio, grades in the subject area, teacher recommendation, and NJASK scores.

In addition to developing all required NJASK skills, the curriculum seeks to enrich students about subjects dealing with national and worldwide interests, past and present. Developing an appreciation and an understanding of the many peoples of this and other nations, students are encouraged to be sensitive toward the needs and values of various cultures in this global society. Finally, an understanding of the issues and institutions of a democratic nation and the responsibilities of its citizens are emphasized.

The 6th grade social studies curriculum encompasses world history from Dawn of Civilization through the Ancient Period, the Middle Ages, and the beginning of the Age of Global Encounters. Geography and map skills are reinforced throughout the year.

The 7th grade social studies course is a survey of American History beginning with Colonization and continuing through to the Civil War and Reconstruction. It includes: Colonization of North America, the American Revolution, the Civil War, and Industrialization.

The 8th grade social studies course consists of one-half year of civics and one-half year modern US History. Civics students do an in-depth examination of the United States Constitution. An interdisciplinary unit on civil rights of the individual has been developed. Students study the organization and function of the federal, state, and local government, as well as the electoral process. Responsibilities of citizenship are stressed. In modern US History, students examine the current era from 1960 to the present. Geography is embedded in grades 6-8. They study the major physical and natural resource regions, landscapes, waterways and climate of all the continents. Locations of countries and major cities on maps are also studied. The effect of the geography of an area on the economy and population of a region is discussed.

MATHEMATICS

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.

MATHEMATICS - Continued

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 introduction 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.

SCIENCE

Science at the middle school level is an integrated program and incorporates topics from earth, life, and physical science each year as specified in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards adopted in 2009. In order to be proficient in science, students are guided through lab activities and student projects to acquire the knowledge and reasoning skills necessary to understand of scientific explanations, generate scientific evidence through active investigation, reflect on scientific knowledge, and participate productively in science.

The sixth grade curriculum introduces students to matter and relative density of an object, frictional force, and forms of energy; earth energy systems and materials, earth history, plate tectonics, weather and climate; organism organization and development, food energy and photosynthesis, heredity and reproduction. Seventh grade reinforces and extends the prior curricula topics including organism organization and development, interdependence, evolution and diversity; properties of matter, energy transfer and conservation; the structure of earth's atmosphere, plate tectonics, and earth's waters.

Completing the middle school science program, the students are prepared for high school and the NJ ASK 8 in science, administered each spring, through their further study of: forces and motion, orbital motion and gravitational force, changes in and properties of matter; soil and landforms in life science, life stages, diet and energy transformations, heredity and reproduction; solar energy, weather and climate, and biogeochemical cycles.

WORLD LANGUAGES

In progressing toward communicative-based instruction in world languages, all students are required to take world language each year in middle school. Sixth grade students will have a choice of taking either a half-year course in French or a half-year course in Spanish. In seventh and eighth grades, students will take either a full year of French, a full year of Spanish, a half year of French, or a half year of Spanish. The full year French and Spanish courses offered in seventh and eighth grades are identical in content to the level one and two courses offered in the high schools.

Students will be assessed in sixth grade to determine their recommended placement in world language for seventh grade. This recommendation is intended to help the student and his/her parent to make an educated decision in choosing the seventh grade world language course. To advance from the full year French or Spanish I to II course, students must receive a minimum final grade of C+; from French or Spanish II to III, a

minimum of B is required. Students seeking to enter level II in ninth grade after completing two half-year courses must receive a minimum final grade of B.

World Languages - Continued

Middletown School District offers a four, five, or six-year program in world languages, depending on the language chosen and when the student begins study. French and Spanish are offered beginning in the middle school and students have the opportunity to become proficient while taking the six-year sequence as well as to take Advanced Placement world language. A four-year program is offered in Latin and Italian, beginning in the 9th grade.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (1/2 year)

The middle school Physical Education curriculum reflects a diversity of experiences based on building skill competencies and developing critical thinking skills that include an emphasis on safety. Cooperative learning activities, more competitive games and highly structured skill units provide opportunities for students to build self-esteem while starting to discover the breadth of their potential.

COMPUTERS (1/4 year)

In sixth grade, students continue to develop an understanding of computer networking, telecommunication and information management, fundamental computer skills, the use of the keyboard, the functions and advantages of computer productivity software, word processing that includes writing samples consistent with core curricular areas, the use of a spreadsheet and multimedia skills, as well as legal, safety, and ethical issues involved in computer and internet usage.

In seventh grade, the areas above are reviewed and reinforced. In addition, students utilize spreadsheets more fully, create a simple database by means of a spreadsheet application, work on desktop publishing to produce writing samples consistent with core curricular areas, and use applications to create an electronic presentation.

In eighth grade, the program reviews and reinforces the content of the previous grades, and provides an opportunity for students to learn and utilize database skills, to increase desktop publishing that include writing samples consistent with core curricular areas, and to create an electronic presentation.

In all three grades, Computer lab project activities complement core curricular subject areas as appropriate. Additionally, students are required to maintain and submit a professional portfolio of their work.

HEALTH (1/4 year)

The middle school Health curriculum, building upon the elementary Health curriculum, continues to lay a foundation of knowledge necessary for encouraging students to choose a healthy lifestyle.

In sixth grade, the units of study include: Preventing Substance Through Good Mental Health including Life Skills Training and Gateway Drugs, Personal Health and Wellness, Family Living and Human Sexuality, and Disease Prevention and Control including HIV/AIDS Education.

In seventh grade, the units of study review and expand upon the units covered in grade six.

In eighth grade, in addition to reviewing and reinforcing the Life Skills Training and HIV/AIDS education units taught previously, the unit on Preventing Substance Abuse Through Good Mental Health also includes information on Club/Designer Drugs and a unit on Accident Prevention and First Aid is included.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Activities with which students at the middle school level may be involved include:

Student Council / Student Activities
Newspaper
Peer Leadership
Boys & Girls Cross Country
Girls Field Hockey*
Boys & Girls Basketball*
Softball*

Yearbook
Drama / Variety Show
Math Club
Boys & Girls Soccer*
Wrestling
Cheerleading*
Baseball*

* 7th and 8th grade only

ELECTIVES - GRADE 6

BAND

The band program includes the instrumental study of scales, rhythm exercises and playing techniques. Students will play various types of music including marches, classical show music, popular music, etc. As individual lessons are not a part of the program, students who elect band must know how to play an instrument as well as read music. Students taking this course are required to perform in a winter concert, a spring concert, and at graduation.

CHORUS

The chorus program is designed to develop student skills required for vocal performance, and includes ear training, basic music theory, music history, vocal production techniques of breathing, tone quality, singing in harmony and counterpoint. Students taking this course are required to perform at school recitals and evening concerts.

ART APPRECIATION

Art appreciation will introduce students to the origin of art as a means to communicate in a visual manner. Students will explore works of art in relation to history and cultural influence. They will be introduced to the elements and principles of art and will use the knowledge learned to create artwork using a variety of techniques and mediums.

MUSIC APPRECIATION

Music appreciation helps the student experience a variety of musical styles. Study will include great composers, instruments of the band and orchestra, and the history of Western music.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

Often referred to as "I'm in Charge", this course teaches students to be responsible, safe and confident when home alone. Students learn how to successfully deal with everyday occurrences, first aid, and emergency situations. Safe snack preparation and baby-sitting skills / child care are also included.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND CURRENT EVENTS

This course is designed to help students build bridges between their curriculum and real-world issues. Students will have the opportunity to research, share, discuss, and hopefully learn from events that are occurring in the world around them.

ELECTIVES - GRADE 7

BAND

This course continues instrumental study in scales and techniques, playing selections of various types of music and the developing of sight-reading skills. Students who elect this course must know how to play an instrument as well as read music and will be required to perform in a winter concert, a spring concert, and at graduation.

CHORUS

The chorus program continues to give students with vocal ability the opportunity to develop the skills required for vocal performance. The repertoire includes choral ensemble and solo material from many musical periods. Students taking this course are required to perform at school recitals and evening concerts.

THEATER 7

The art of drama is designed to have students explore their creativity and experience acting, scene design, lighting, play writing, make-up, costumes, directing, and dance.

ART 7

This course will focus on giving the student experiences with which to develop his/her ability to express himself/herself artistically while further developing his/her respect and sensitivity to the arts. Personal imagination is developed and encouraged through activities which will involve the elements and principles of art and a variety of introductory techniques and mediums, including drawing, painting, printmaking, computer-generated art, and working with 3D form.

INTRODUCTION TO VIDEO PRODUCTION - GRADE 7

This course will give students an opportunity to actively plan and actually produce live broadcasts that may be heard/viewed throughout the school and on the local cable station. Through this hands-on broadcasting experience, students may report on such topics as weather, sports, school and district events and course offerings, historical trivia, student accomplishments, "random acts of kindness", and announcements from teachers and the office.

TEAM PROBLEM SOLVING 7

In this course, students work with each other as a team to evaluate ideas, make decisions, and create solutions to a variety of short- and long-term problems. As a result of their experiences, creative thinking is fostered, problem-solving skills are developed, and self-confidence is increased.

ELECTIVES - GRADE 8

BAND

This course continues instrumental study in scales and techniques, playing selections of various types of music and the developing of sight-reading skills. Students who elect this course MUST play a band instrument. Students taking this course are required to perform in a winter concert, a spring concert, and at graduation.

CHORUS

The chorus program continues to give students with vocal ability the opportunity to develop the skills required for vocal performance. The repertoire includes choral ensemble and solo material from many musical periods. Students taking this course are required to perform at school recitals and evening concerts.

INTRODUCTION TO VIDEO PRODUCTION - GRADE 8

This course will give students an opportunity to actively plan and actually produce live broadcasts that may be heard/viewed throughout the school and on the local cable station. Through this hands-on broadcasting experience, students may report on such topics as weather, sports, school and district events and course offerings, historical trivia, student accomplishments, "random acts of kindness", and announcements from teachers and the office. (Introduction to Video Production - Grade 7 is not required prior to taking this course.)

APPLIED ARTS 8

Lifetime skills are introduced and students are encouraged to demonstrate their creativity through a range of projects. They are given the opportunity to apply what is being learned for personal satisfaction and the development of life skills. Projects will involve the students in the design and construction of a variety of different pieces of work. These may include projects created through computer technology, sewing and needlecraft, work with textiles, or functional art and design.

ART 8

This program will focus on problem-solving experiments in color theory, pattern, one point perspective, lettering, use of the ruler, drawing the human face and figure, contour drawing, 3D design, and explorations of texture and value. Materials used will include many types of art mediums such as pencil, tempera or acrylic paint, colored pencils, markers, clay, pen and ink, and pastels.

DRAMA 8

Drama is an art form that tells a story through the speech and actions of the character in a story. Working in groups and individually, this exciting course takes the student through a variety of activities such as pantomime, improvisation, theater games, and scene study.

Published by

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICIES

The Middletown Township Board of Education affirms its responsibilities to ensure all students in the public schools of this township equal educational opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin or social or economic status. Lack of English language skills will not be a deterrent to admission to any program. No otherwise qualified handicapped individuals shall solely by reason of their handicap be denied the benefits of or subjected to discrimination in any activity.

The school system's Affirmative Action Plans for School/Classroom Practices are on file in the Superintendent's office.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Board of Education has established a procedure for staff, students or parents on a student's behalf to follow in filing a complaint dealing with alleged violation, misinterpretation or inequitable application of the policies and practices of the school district relative to provisions of Federal and State anti-discrimination legislation. Details of the grievance procedures are included in the school district's policy manual under Policy #4111.

The Building Principal or designee serves as the first step of this grievance procedure.

The District Affirmative Action Officer is:

Mary Ellen Walker, District Director of Operations
Middletown Township Board of Education
834 Leonardville Road
Leonardo, New Jersey 07737
(732) 671-3850

The District 504 Compliance Officer is:

Robert Dunn, District Director of Student Services
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