

HERRICKS MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK



RESPECT
RESPONSIBILITY
READINESS

HERRICKS SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The Herricks School District, a Community of Learners, through its educational programs, promotes intellectual curiosity and creative expression, values diversity, and measures success by one's personal development and contributions to society.

Board of Education

Brian Hassan, President
Juleigh Chin, Vice President
Nancy Feinstein, Trustee
James Gounaris, Trustee
Henry R. Zanetti, Trustee

Central Administration

Dr. Fino M. Celano, Superintendent
Elizabeth Guercin, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
Lisa Rutkoske, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Dina Maggiacomo, Executive Director for Human Resources

Building Administration

Joan Keegan, Principal
Thomas Aird, Assistant Principal
Gina Horton, Assistant Principal

Dr. Stephanie Knowles, Special Education Chairperson
Diane McCabe, Science Chairperson

WHAT IS A TEENAGER?

“What is a teenager?”
I was asked one day.
I knew what he was
But what should I say?
He is noise and confusion
He is silence that’s deep
He is sunshine and laughter
Or a cloud that will weep.
He is as swift as an arrow
He’s a waster of time.
He wants to be rich,
But can’t save a dime.
He is rude and nasty
He is polite as can be.
He wants parental guidance,
But fights to be free.
He is aggressive and bossy
He is timid and shy.
He knows all the answers
But still will ask “Why?”
He is awkward and clumsy.
He is graceful and poised.
He is ever changing,
But don’t be annoyed.
“What is a teenager?”
I asked one day.
He is the future unfolding;
Don’t stand in his way.

- *Author Unknown*

Herricks Middle School Parent Handbook

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Herricks Middle School Phone Directory

Main Phone #: 305-8600

Fax #: 739-4738

Principal

Joan Keegan – Principal 305-8601
Rosemarie Faust, Secretary 305-8633

Assistant Principal

Tom Aird 305-8602
Gina Horton 305-8603

Athletic Coordinator

Craig Stern 305-8615

Director of English/Reading/Library

Michael Imondi 305-8711

Related Arts and Business Chairperson

Mary Passero 305-8716

Director of Guidance (K–12)

Lori Dorr-Bialkoski 305-8669
Dennis Conroy 305-8660
Stephanie Gallo 305-8658
Kerrin Muller 305-8659
Sharon Schultz, Secretary 305-8657

Library Media Center

Jodi Thompson 305-8609

Director of Mathematics

Geetha Murthy 305-8613

Director of Music and Performing Arts

Anissa Arnold 305-8767

Nurse

Dana Lieberman 305-8642

Director of Physical Education and Health

Jim Petricca 305-8769

Science Chairperson

Diane McCabe 305-8617

Shelter Rock Academy Director

Allison Barshak 305-8800
Annegret Brown, Psychologist 305-8881
Angela Raio, Secretary 305-8882
305-8884

Social Studies Chairperson

Tony Cillis

305-8718

Special Education Chairperson

Stephanie Knowles

305-8604

305-8629

Maria Lufrano, Secretary

305-8638

Student Services

Jaclyn Carlo, Psychologist

305-8610

305-8630

Joanne Ditchik, Social Worker

305-8632

Jessica Eichin, Psychologist

305-8631

Director of World Languages, Immersion, ENL/ESL (K-12)

Francesco Fratto

305-8719

CODE OF CONDUCT

Statement of Philosophy

Each student at Herricks Middle School is entitled to a rich educational experience. Each student has the right to learn, grow as an individual, mature, and be treated with respect in a safe and healthy learning environment. The administration, teachers, parents and students will work collaboratively to see that such an environment exists in the Middle School. Students will be treated as individuals who are responsible for their own actions, respectful to others, and ready to learn on a daily basis.

Expected Positive Behaviors

Listed below are positive behaviors we expect all students to demonstrate throughout the school year:

Dress

Coats and hats must be deposited in lockers at the beginning of the school day and remain there until dismissal. Students may bring coats to eleventh period classes if the teacher permits. Dress should not only compliment the wearer, but also demonstrate pride in oneself and our school. No apparel may be worn which is either suggestive, disruptive, a hazard to the student, or a distraction from the learning process.

Language

The language we use in school towards all should be respectful. The use of appropriate language helps to create a positive environment that is conducive to learning free of conflict.

Classroom Behavior

Students should show respect for fellow students, teachers, school property and other support staff. All the adults in school are working together towards a common purpose of helping each student grow and achieve both academically and socially. Food and drink must be confined to the cafeteria unless you are given permission to eat elsewhere.

Cell Phones

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted to be used in school. Therefore, it is suggested to keep cell phones off during the day. It can be a disruption to the learning experiences of others. If a cell phone is visible, it will

be confiscated until the end of the school day. Upon completion of the school day, the phone can be picked up in the Assistant Principal's Office. Multiple infractions will result in a meeting with a parent/guardian.

Student Use of Electronic or Digital Recording Devices

Students must request permission of the instructor to record any instructional activity. Any type of recording, whether it is video, audio, or any other format requires both the consent of the instructor and notification of all parties involved. All recordings made by students having been granted consent are intended for use by the creator as a review of instructional presentations and discussions. Any other use, including but not limited to the posting of such recordings to any publicly available forum, is strictly prohibited without the prior express permission of the instructor and any other parties included in the recording.

Hallways

Students will be expected to proceed directly to their classes during the four minute passing periods. In order to prevent injury, everyone must keep to the right when moving through the corridors and stairwells. Running, pushing, shouting, scuffling and other forms of dangerous or disorderly behaviors are prohibited. Disciplinary action will be taken if these behaviors are seen by a staff member.

Cafeteria

During lunch students will follow the directions of the faculty assigned for that period. Tables and all areas should be kept clean and trash thrown away. Students should maintain a conversational tone when talking with each other and should proceed in an orderly fashion when buying lunch and during dismissal.

Cafeteria Guidelines:

1. Students have the first week of school to select a seat. After this point, seats may only be changed with the permission of a teacher.
2. Students may leave their seats to purchase a snack or empty their trays.
3. When the weather is nice, students will be permitted to eat in the courtyard on a rotating basis.
4. Students may not leave unless dismissed by a teacher or aide. Students will not be dismissed unless the tabletop and floor in the vicinity are clean.

5. Students must obtain a pass in order to use the bathroom. Girls must use the bathroom across the hall. Boys must use the bathroom in the science corridor.
6. Students may not take any food or drink from the cafeteria into the hallways or classrooms.
7. Voices must not exceed a normal volume.

Bus Behavior

Students must carry a bus pass every day; officials must occasionally verify that a pupil is actually assigned to a particular bus. Riding on the bus to and from school and on field trips is a privilege and must be done in a safe way. Students should remain seated and exhibit self control so the bus driver may get everyone to school safely. Potentially dangerous, disorderly or disrespectful behavior will result in the suspension of bus ridership.

School Law

Herricks students are always expected to uphold the highest standards of behavior. Students are reminded that maintaining model behavior not only benefits oneself, but classmates as well. In keeping with the school district's discipline policy, students are held responsible for the consequences of their actions.

Students Against Violence in Schools (S.A.V.E.) was implemented in 2000 centered around creating a safe school environment.

*If a student is found guilty of possessing a weapon or an item that resembles a weapon on school grounds and/or at a school function conducted off school grounds, after a Superintendent's hearing shall be subject to a penalty of suspension for up to one year. The Administration will determine the penalty on a case-by-case basis.

The policy is very strict. Every student has the right to go to school in a safe environment. This policy will help to create a positive school community.

Dignity for All Students Act (D.A.S.A.)

As of July 1, 2012, all students are protected under this new law which provides everyone with the right to attend school in a safe, welcoming and caring environment. Bullying and Harassment based on race, weight, national origin, ethnicity, religion or religious practice, mental or physical ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expressions is not permitted in our School Community.

Below is an explanation of Bullying and Harassment for reference:

Bullying:

Is an aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions. It involves patterns of behavior repeated over time and an imbalance of power or strength.

Bullying can take many forms: verbal, physical, through social exclusion or isolation, spreading lies or false rumors, being threatened or forced to do things by the bully, racial bullying, sexual bullying, cyberbullying (via cell phone or Internet).

Harassment:

Harassment can take many forms and can include bullying, intimidation, racial, religious or ethnic slurs, rumors, "put-downs," jokes, sexual comments, unwelcome compliments, pranks and/or other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual which:

1. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or an offensive working learning environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or education;
3. Has the purpose or effect of substantially disrupting the operation of the school;
4. Affects an individual's educational opportunities.



Responses to Negative Behavior

Possible Consequences

1. Student Conference
2. Detention – student is required to stay after school. Detention follows one day after the precipitating incident, leaving time for parents to arrange for transportation.
3. Parent Notification
4. Loss of school privileges
5. Parent Conference
6. Removal from class
7. Suspension from school – student is kept home during school hours. Student is not allowed to be around the school building or participate in any school activities.
8. Referral to Superintendent

Examples of negative behavior include, but are not limited to, fighting, vandalism, repeated truancy, the visiting of any Internet site not pertinent to academic investigation, the sending of unauthorized e-mails of a personal nature, and disrespect to others. The length of the consequence varies depending on the nature of the offense and the student's discipline record. Individual teachers have the authority to assign a detention for behavior that disrupts students from learning.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance

In order to fully avail themselves of our educational opportunities and to follow New York State law, students must attend school and arrive promptly. If your child cannot attend, you should call the school's telephone message machine (305-8699) before 7:30 a.m. or the attendance secretary (305-8600) after 7:30 a.m. When returning to school after an absence, a parental letter must be delivered to the attendance teacher incorporating the following information:

- Present date
- Date student was absent
- Explanation for absence
- Parent's signature

Tardy students first arriving to class after 7:45 a.m. will be directed to the office, where they must sign the lateness log. Parents will subsequently be notified. Students arriving more than 30 minutes late must bring a parental explanatory note.

Students absent from school fewer than three days are responsible for obtaining homework assignments from a classmate. In cases of **extended absence of three days or longer**, parents may request homework assignments through the Guidance Office. Call the Guidance Office, 305-8612, before 12 noon to obtain this homework. Upon returning to school, the student must consult with his/her teachers in order to determine due dates for missing work.

Students may not leave the building during school hours without the permission of the Nurse's Office. Parents or guardians wishing to remove a student from school must report to the Main Office and complete the Early Dismissal Log.

Cutting (absence from class without permission) is an act of truancy and results in detention or suspension (the latter in repetitive cases).

Bicycles

Due to safety considerations, you must dismount the bicycle when you arrive on school grounds. Bicycles must be secured to one of the bicycle racks.

Extra Help

Teachers provide instructional support after school on a regularly scheduled basis as outlined below. Sixth grade teachers also offer help class.

Monday: English, Science, Music, Art/Related Arts

Tuesday: Mathematics, Health, Physical Education, Special Education, Grade 6 Social Studies

Wednesday: World Language, Grade 7 and 8 Social Studies

Field Trips

Students must comply with the directions of chaperones as if they were present in the school building. Disruptive or uncooperative behavior will result in the student's possible exclusion from future field trips in addition to other corrective measures.

Health Services

If a student feels ill, a pass to the Nurse's Office should be obtained. In the event the Nurse is not in the Office, proceed to the Main Office. Students' medications must be kept with the Nurse along with specific instructions from the parent or doctor.

Any accident occurring in the school building or on school grounds, whether before, during or after school, must be immediately reported to the teacher in charge or to the Nurse's Office.

Library Media Center

The HMS Library Media Center is truly a 21st Century learning environment for our students and faculty that allows education to go beyond the physical walls of our library space. Equipped with state of the art technology, students have access to PCs, iPads, laptops, Apple TVs, Macs, Playaways, Nooks, ebooks, audio-books and databases. Classes utilize the library space to conduct research for projects and partake in class activities and lessons. Students may come to the library when it is open to check out materials, learn to download digital books and get help using all of our materials and resources.

Lockers

In addition to hallway lockers, the physical education department issues combination locks for use on gymnasium lockers. Locker combinations must be kept strictly confidential. Also, the dial must be turned after closing the locker door. Students may not attach personal locks or deface lockers. Stickers should not be placed on lockers. Lockers remain the property of the school, which reserves the right to search the contents of lockers.

School Closing/Delayed Opening

In the event that inclement weather or an emergency necessitates the closing of school or a delayed opening, the following television and AM radio stations will broadcast an announcement, generally between 6:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m.

For School Closing Information:

TV Stations:

Channel 12 (Cablevision) or Channel 1 (FIOS)

Radio Stations:

WNBC 660	WINS 1010
WWOR 710	WHLI 1100
WABC 770	WNEW 1130

Website: www.herricks.org **Please do not call the school.**

If you can access the district webpage postings related to weather or emergencies, closings/delayed openings are typically found here before any other form of communication.

Parent Portal and List Serve

It is highly recommended that you take advantage of registering for one or our many available e-newsletters and the parent portal. You can register for the e-news list serves from the district homepage. The parent portal will allow you to see information related to your child's attendance and grades. To register for the portal, please call the Guidance Department at 305-8657.

Student Services

Our certified helping professionals offer students and parents someone who will listen and support their needs. Any student who would like to meet with their **guidance counselor**, a **psychologist** or **social worker** may arrange an appointment through the guidance secretary.

Messages/Lunches for Students

In the event your child has left something home, we ask that you register the item with our front door security guard. You do not need to go to the main office, unless otherwise directed. Students for whom there are messages, lunches, sports equipment, school materials, etc., from home will have their names posted on the white board in the front hall. Unless there is an emergency, classes will not be interrupted in order to deliver a message.

Telephones

Students may use the telephone in the main office in case of emergency. Cell phones may not be used during the academic day for texting or calling.

Textbooks

All basic textbooks are loaned to students for their use during the school year. All textbooks must be covered, maintained in a responsible manner, with the student's name written in the inside cover. A fine will be levied for lost or damaged books.

Lost Items

Lost Items can be turned in and recovered in the main office or in a bin in the custodial office. Students are encouraged not to bring valuable items to school and to label all personal items.

Visitors

All school visitors must sign in and obtain a pass from the Main Office. Except under extraordinary circumstances, pupils may not have guests accompany them to school. If a student would like to make that request, it should be done at least one week prior to said visit. Parents and Guardians may begin the process by writing an e-mail or submitting a letter of request. Please detail the reason for the visit.

Extracurricular Clubs and Sports

Being an active participant in the middle school is a very important part of your educational experience. Getting involved provides you with opportunities to explore new interests and talents, develop new skills, and build positive relationships. The middle school offers a wide variety of clubs and sports. A pamphlet describing these activities is distributed to students every autumn during our clubs and activities assembly. In addition all club and sports information can be found at <http://herricks.org/middleschool.cfm>. We encourage you to become active in one or more of the following:

Intramural Sports

Intramural sports are held at the middle school on Monday's and Wednesday's from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. All boys and girls in grades 6, 7 and 8 are welcome to participate.

Interscholastic Sports

By State regulation, interscholastic sports are only open to seventh and eighth grade students. You must have a current physical and a permission slip signed by a parent in order to participate. All forms may be obtained from the school nurse or on our school's website under the [Forms](#) Quick Link. Please go to the [Athletic Update](#) Quick Link for up to date information regarding game changes and cancellations. We encourage you to become active in one or more of the following sports:

Fall

Boys Soccer
Girls Soccer
Girls Tennis
Football
Coed Cross Country

Winter I

Boys Basketball
Girls Volleyball

Winter II

Boys Volleyball
Girls Basketball
Wrestling

Spring

Boys Baseball
Boys Lacrosse
Boys Tennis
Girls Lacrosse
Girls Softball
Coed Track

CLUBS

OPEN TO GRADES

Art Club	6, 7, 8
Art Honor Society	8
Chamber Orchestra	6, 7, 8
Chess and Game Club	6, 7, 8
Computer Club	6, 7, 8
Gardening Club	6, 7, 8
HMS Book Review	6, 7, 8
Italian Club	6, 7, 8
Jazz Ensemble	6, 7, 8
Math Olympiads	6
Math Research Program	6, 7, 8
Mathletes	7, 8
Mother-Daughter Book Club	6, 7, 8
National History Day	6, 7, 8
Sabelotodo Spanish Club	6, 7, 8
Science Club	6, 7, 8
Spanish Immersion	6, 7, 8
Study Center	6, 7, 8
Technology Club	6, 7, 8
We The People: Project Citizen	6, 7, 8
Wind Ensemble	6, 7, 8



Student Government

The Student Council is an organization through which students express their opinions and assist in the administration of school activities. The Council promotes leadership, initiative and a sense of responsibility among its members.

In the fall of each year, a president, vice president and secretary are elected to carry out the work of the year. Also elected are one representative and an alternate from each social studies class. It is the responsibility of the representatives to bring to the Council's attention suggestions, concerns and complaints from their classmates and to report the actions of the Council to their fellow students.

SEL PROGRAMS

Herricks Middle School promotes a positive school climate that fosters a culture of respect between students and staff, providing all students with a supportive and safe environment in which to grow academically and socially. The following is a list of programs that focus on promoting dignity and respect for all students.

Second Step Curriculum - Research and Evidence Based Anti-Violent/Anti-Bullying Program in grades 6 and 7.

This interactive and educational program is a structured curriculum that teaches social and emotional skills that lead to school success. This program has proven to be effective at improving students' social and emotional knowledge, pro-social attitudes and behavior. It provides a foundation for creating a safe, respectful learning environment for all students. The five themes in the Second Step Program are:

1. Empathy and communication
 2. Bullying prevention
 3. Emotion management and coping
 4. Problem solving, decision making and goal setting
 5. Substance abuse prevention
- **Sixth Grade** – implemented in monthly lessons in every classroom facilitated by counselors, social worker and psychologists.
 - **Seventh Grade** – implemented in the guidance classes taught by guidance counselors daily. The school social worker facilitates some of the lessons. Each guidance class is a quarter long that meets every other day. Every seventh grade student is scheduled for this class during one of the four quarters.
 - **Eighth Grade - TACK** – (Tolerance, Acceptance, Caring, Kindness). Peer Education/Leadership Program that provides a variety of SEL experiences.
 1. All eighth grade students participate in team-based peer education lessons and activities.
 2. All eighth grade students attend grade level group presentations on sensitivity awareness.

3. TACK Buddies – eighth grade students are selected and trained to become older buddies to younger students in the school to provide support, encouragement and a positive peer experience.
4. Connections – 8th eighth grade students who are interested in reaching out to students in the building with special needs. They are trained to work with this special population to facilitate interactive activities and foster positive relations.
5. Student meetings with eighth graders to discuss, explore and plan student activities to increase student awareness on bullying and harassment.

School-Wide Activities –

- “Gotcha” Program – Recognizes positive student actions by awarding students with “Gotcha” certificates and bracelets throughout the year.
- “Class Dismissed” – Anti-bullying theatrical play that sends a powerful message – “See It, Say It, Stop It.”
- Assistant District Attorney in Nassau County – Presentation on the dangers and misuses of the internet and social networking.
 - Professional speakers on drugs and alcohol misuse
 - Professional motivational speakers on making good decisions
 - Fundraising events are organized throughout the year to support selected charities to promote the importance of helping others.

Anti-Bias Consortium – Attendance at anti-bias consortium meetings throughout the year by Student Services Department.

THE STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND PROGRAMS

The Student Services Department has a comprehensive, developmental and diverse program that is designed to meet the needs of all students. All members work closely with teachers to provide your child with academic, social and emotional support. Additionally, support and education are provided to you through orientations and conferences. The middle school program includes transition services, academic advisement, high school academic program planning, college and career awareness, character education, curriculum-based classroom guidance programs, small group and individual counseling and psycho-educational testing.

Counselors serve as liaisons between you, teachers and administrators. As student advocates, they work from a developmental approach to foster positive relationships. Students are assigned to a counselor according to their homeroom teacher in grade six. In seventh grade and eighth grade, students are assigned to a counselor according to team placement. You and your child are encouraged to visit the Guidance Office or to call if you have any questions or concerns. Our doors are always open.

Our school psychologists work with students, staff and parents to help maximize the academic, social and emotional development of students. Psychologists conduct classroom observations, consult with teachers and parents and facilitate group and individual counseling sessions. In addition, comprehensive diagnostic evaluations are provided for students who may need additional services.

Our school social worker collaborates with all student service members, staff and parents to support the students' social, academic and emotional growth. Small groups are facilitated throughout the year focusing on issues such as social skills, decision-making and coping with pressures in constructive ways. Other services include individual counseling, parent conferences and referrals to outside professionals.

Sixth Grade Classroom Guidance Program

Once a month your child's guidance counselor and/or social worker or psychologist will be visiting the class for educational guidance presentations using the evidence-based, award-winning Second Step program. This program has proven to be effective at improving students' social and emotional knowledge and skills, pro-social attitudes, and behavior. As a program for all students, it provides a foundation for creating a safe, respectful learning environment.

The five themes in the Second Step Program are:

- Empathy and Communication
- Bullying prevention
- Emotion management and Coping
- Problem solving, decision making, and goal setting
- Substance Abuse prevention

Social and emotional learning (SEL) supports academic achievement by helping students focus on their schoolwork, manage emotions, behave in classrooms, and build connections in school through improved relations with their peers and teachers. Teaching social and emotional skills supports our school's mission to build students who are academically and socially successful.

Seventh Grade Classroom Guidance Program

Seventh grade students participate in a developmental class taught by his or her guidance counselor. The class is designed to help students learn good decision-making skills, grow as an individual, and build close relations with his or her guidance counselor. The curriculum is based on the Second Step program on the seventh grade level. The class meets on alternating days for one quarter. The curriculums' themes include:

- Careers
- Empathy and Communication
- Bullying Prevention
- Emotion Management and Coping
- Problem solving, decision making and goal setting
- Substance Abuse prevention

TACK: Tolerance, Acceptance, Caring & Kindness

TACK is a volunteer eighth grade peer leadership program that promotes positive peer relationships among students. The school social worker organizes the program annually, and schedules influential speakers to present to our students throughout the year. The goal of the program is to promote a tolerant, accepting, caring and kind environment in the middle school.

CONNECTIONS

A select group of TACK members volunteer to participate in the Connections Program that provides them with the opportunity to “connect” with the students in the Life Skills class. These TACK members receive sensitivity and social skills training by the school psychologist to help them establish positive relationships with this special population. The goal of this program is to create opportunities for positive interaction between the TACK and Life Skills students.

Mentoring Programs

The Adult Mentoring Program pairs faculty trained as mentors with students who would benefit from interaction with positive adult role models. Students selected to be part of this program are referred from a variety of sources, and you may request that your child be considered. Mentors build close working relationships with their students and guide them in addressing personal, academic and emotional issues in a productive manner. Mentors encourage students to reach their best personal and academic potential through thoughtful and caring guidance.

The Student Mentoring Program involves eighth grade TACK members who can volunteer to be student mentors for sixth and seventh grade students who would benefit from positive student influences and relationships. Students selected to be part of this program are referred from a variety of sources, and you may request that your child be considered. Participants are paired with supervised TACK students who are trained as mentors. The goal of the program is to establish positive peer relationships and to provide peer support.

Group Counseling Program

The Student Services Department runs many voluntary discussion groups for students throughout the year. All students are invited to join a variety of topic based groups offered each year.

STUDENT TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

The Elementary School Visit

The guidance department visits each elementary school with a small group of sixth grade students in May for a middle school orientation. Each fifth grade class will learn about the sixth grade academic teachers, extra-curricular activities, sports, student schedules, and trips. Following this orientation, each elementary school will visit the middle school in June. Each school visits the middle school building for a morning orientation program where students will:

- Meet the Principal and Assistant Principal
- Learn more about schedules, sports, and clubs
- Tour the building
- Learn helpful study tips
- Question & Answer session

Incoming 6th grade Parent Evening Orientation in Spring

The New Student Buddy Program

This program is designed to help new families to the Herricks district become more familiar and comfortable with the Middle School. Each new entrant, along with their family members, is invited in late August to meet with current middle school students and guidance counselors for an orientation which includes:

- Meeting the Principal and Assistant Principal
- Meeting the Student Service Department
- Meeting current Herricks students
- Learning about the middle school from student buddies
- Tour of building
- Question & Answer session

The Eighth Grade Transition Conferences

Guidance counselors offer individual parent/student high school transitional conferences during the months of February and March to begin preparing students for their high school experience. Counselors review and discuss the following:

- New York State graduation requirements
- Required New York State Exams
- 9th grade schedule
- Extracurricular activities
- Preparation for college

Incoming 9th grade Parent Evening Orientation in January

Incoming 9th grade Student Evening Orientation in April

8th Grade Career and College Readiness Program

The importance of high school performance as it relates to college opportunities is the focus of this program in June. Interactive games and activities are a part of this valuable experience. The following is a list of highlighted activities:

- Review of an academic transcript
- Review of an activities resume
- Review of a college essay
- Review of recommendation letters
- Jeopardy game
- College matching game

Freshman Focus Program

The entire eighth grade visits the high school in June for a visit with over 100 student members from the Freshman Focus group of juniors. The program provides students with the opportunity to tour the building, meet the principal, assistant principal and guidance counselors and enjoy lunch in the high school courtyard.

The Bridge Program

This program identifies eighth grade students who may need extra support as they transition to the high school, due to a variety of circumstances. To ease the transition, high school counselors, psychologists and social workers meet with these students individually to help connect them with a support person who will serve as a bridge between the two buildings.

SIXTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Language Arts

The Sixth Grade English Language Arts program is designed to help students develop and exercise higher-level thinking skills in reading and writing by analyzing, synthesizing, and critiquing literary and informational text. Students have the opportunity to exercise these skills as they explore a variety of genre in fiction and informational text, including novels, short stories, essays, and articles. Sample units may include personal narrative, persuasive essay, literary essay, realistic and nonfiction writing. The program also fosters skills in vocabulary, spelling and grammar. Students are expected to actively engage in independent reading, set independent reading goals, and select texts that both match interests and challenge them to grow as readers.

Math

The Grade 6 Math curriculum is based on the NYS Common Core State Standards. This course is designed to help students begin the transition from arithmetic to algebraic thinking. It includes concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; extending the understanding of multiplication and division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers. Students will develop algebraic thinking through the investigation of patterns, the use of expressions, equations and inequalities to represent relationships and develop an understanding of statistical thinking. Throughout the course there is an emphasis on problem-solving, communication, reasoning, representations and connections.

The Honors Math 6 curriculum is a rigorous course of study. This compacted course will be based on NYS Common Core math standards for sixth and seventh grades, preparing students for Algebra I (Honors Math 7) in eighth grade and Geometry (Honors Math 8) in eighth grade, both for high school credit. This is a fast paced and challenging course, and selection into this honors program is based on NWEA scores as well as overall performance in fourth and fifth grade math. It is required that these students complete the Summer Accelerated Math 6 Prep course.

Science

Our sixth grade Science program begins with an introduction to the Scientific Method through observation and experimentation. The Ecology unit is a study of the relationship between ecosystems and the biotic and abiotic factors that are found within them. We also take a look at the all of the land biomes found on Earth. We examine their characteristics and the factors that affect them. Our annual field trip to the Bronx Zoo looks at animals and how they are adapted to

their environments. In the “How to” unit students learn a variety of scientific procedures through a “learning-by-doing” approach. This unit is focused on the Metric system and the techniques of using scientific tools such as the metric ruler, graduated cylinder and the triple beam balance to determine metric length, metric volume and metric mass. The unit on Weather introduces students to many of the variables that factor in determining and forecasting the weather outside. Students will examine the variables of weather and learn to use many of the tools used to measure these variables. Students will learn why we have the weather we do outside as well as how to predict what will happen next with our weather.

Grade 6 – Science Gemini

Students enrolled in the grade 6 Science Gemini course must have participated in grade 5 Gemini.

This course has been designed to follow the Next Generation Science Standards for Middle School – Physical Sciences. Our students are introduced to the following areas of study: Matter and its Interactions, Motion and Stability; Forces and Interactions, Energy, Waves and Their Applications. This is a laboratory centered course allowing students to discover and understand the various areas of study.

Social Studies

The grade 6 social studies program emphasizes the interdependence of all people specifically concentrating on ancient civilizations and the Eastern Hemisphere. The program focuses on a social science perspective emphasizing the interaction of geography, economics and history. These core disciplines are used to develop and draw relationships and understandings about social/cultural, political, and historic aspects of life during the earliest civilizations of mankind. Students will begin to think and use skills a historian might to answer questions including describing their conclusions with research.

World Language

Students begin their study of French, Italian, Chinese, or Spanish in the sixth grade. Grade 6 World Language teachers strive to teach in the target language as much as possible, thereby immersing students in their language of choice. Students will learn basic vocabulary through the use of games, skits, and role plays, videos, music, crafts, fantasy trips and other activities, all set within thematic units such as time, weather, and family. Lessons will require students to use all four learning modalities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

In addition to learning about the culture, traditions, customs and folkways of the French, Italian, Chinese, and Spanish people, your child will come to understand the effect of these languages on the New York area and its people. Grade 6 World Language courses are offered on alternate days for the entire school year.

Art – One Quarter

In sixth grade, art classes meet on an alternating day basis for one half of the year. The curriculum strives to balance the creative expression of childhood with the growing awareness and need for self-expression that is typical of the middle school experience. Your child will be exposed to many different art materials and techniques as he or she creates and interprets works of art. The creative process is emphasized, and your child is encouraged to make decisions about imagery based on class discussion on the elements and principles of design. Concepts that are stressed include the use of color, balance, shape, space and composition. Your child will study the art of different cultures from around the world and incorporate that knowledge into the successful completion of all of his or her projects.

Health Education

Middle School Health Education classes are designed to give students information about contemporary health issues, factual information and to learn about the decision making process. High risk behaviors and their consequences are explored at great length. Our health education courses offer an activity-based curriculum, in which students are afforded the opportunity to work in small groups on various research projects. A basic understanding of wellness is enhanced, as the students assist one another in recognizing the influential forces that act upon them, such as advertising and peer pressure. Topics covered are as follows, but not limited to: stress management, food and fitness, drugs and alcohol, communication, decision making, dating and relationships, sex education, male and female reproductive systems.

Music

Your child will experience music in one of the four course offerings: band, chorus, orchestra, or general music. In music, it is our goal to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make music a meaningful part of everyday life. Students with prior experience playing an instrument can be a member of the band or orchestra. In the performing groups, students develop ensemble skills as well as enhance their individual skills. The performing groups are featured in evening concerts each year during the months of December and May. Because each member of the ensemble is important, all students are required to participate in these performances. Students enrolled in band or orchestra will also attend one sectional (group lesson) per week.

During sectionals time, students will receive individualized attention to help them become more successful in playing their instrument. Sectionals are scheduled during the school day on a rotating basis. Each year will expand on musical concepts from the previous year.

Physical Education

Your child will be introduced to a variety of activities during their physical education class. Our program is fitness oriented in nature, but it provides students the opportunity to experience problem solving tasks, sports oriented games, cooperative activities, team and individual sports and lifetime activities. Proper attire is expected of every child participating in physical education. This should include: athletic socks, sneakers, athletic shorts or sweat pants, a T-shirt or sweat shirt. To help ensure safety, we ask all students to refrain from wearing jewelry during physical education class. Every student is issued a physical education locker. Students may keep a change of clothing in their locker to wear during physical education class. We strongly recommend the students bring a change of clothing on a regular basis for physical education class. We also recommend that students keep their personal belongings in their locker during physical education class.

On the middle school web-site, we post a monthly fitness calendar which includes daily exercises for your child to complete. Parents are asked to sign off on the fitness calendar, indicating that their child has completed the exercises which are listed.

SEVENTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Language Arts

Seventh grade English classes are designed to help students develop critical skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Emphasis is placed on developing research skills, forming and defending arguments, and analyzing fiction and nonfiction texts, including novels, short stories, poems, and articles. Students will be expected to actively engage in independent reading, selecting texts that both match their interests and challenge them to grow as readers.

Math

The Grade 7 Math curriculum is based on the NYS Common Core State Standards for Grade 7. This course focuses on problem solving with rates, ratios and proportional relationships. Students will apply and extend previous understandings of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply and divide rational numbers; use properties of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply and divide rational numbers; use properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions and solve real-life and mathematical problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations. Topics will also include study of geometry, probability and Statistics. ***Students take the NYS Grade 7 Math Assessment.***

The Honors Math 7 course is based on the NYS Common Core standards for eighth grade and Algebra I. This compacted, rigorous and fast paced curriculum focuses on in-depth understanding of functions and problem solving with polynomial, linear, exponential and quadratic functions. Students will study properties of exponents, operations with polynomial expressions, rational and irrational numbers. Students will examine Geometry concepts of congruence, similarity and transformations. Modeling with mathematics and problem solving are emphasized in this course. The use of a graphing calculator is required. ***Students take the CC Algebra I Regents exam in June.***

Science

Our seventh grade Science curriculum is an in-depth focus into Life Science. Within this curriculum our students examine the structures and functions of living organisms as simple yet complex as a single cell to multi-cellular organisms. Our students are introduced to many of the processes that take place within living organisms such as diffusion, osmosis and respiration. We also introduce a unit on Genetics that allows us to introduce the structure and function of DNA, as well as the processes of mitosis and meiosis. Our curriculum also examines several of the body systems, such as the skeletal, circulatory and nervous systems.

This curriculum lends itself to a laboratory centered approach, with students using compound microscopes to examine various single celled organisms as well as the process of mitosis. There are many laboratory experiments performed throughout the year related to the various topics being taught.

Grade 7 - Science Gemini

Students enrolled in this course must have participated in the grade 6 Science Gemini course.

This course has been designed to follow the Next Generation Science Standards for Middle School - Life Sciences. Our students are introduced to the following areas of study: From Molecules to Organisms: Structure and Processes, Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy and Dynamics, Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits, and Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity. This is a laboratory centered course allowing students to discover and understand the various areas of study. This course meets for seven and a half periods of science per week due the laboratory work associated with this course.

Social Studies

The seventh grade course is the beginning of a two-year historical study of the United States and New York State. The governments are analyzed with respect to their establishment, structure, and actual workings. The major units of study include pre-Columbian culture, European exploration and colonization of the Americas, colonial life, creation of the United States, and life in the United States through the Civil War.

The course teaches basic concepts concerning social history, political science, geography, sociology, anthropology, and archeology. At the same time, skills such as reading maps and globes, researching, writing, listening, reading primary and secondary source material, and evaluating media are developed.

World Language

Students continue their study of French, Italian, Chinese, or Spanish in the seventh grade by expanding their vocabulary and use of linguistic structures through the exploration of new themes. There will be increased expectations for students to communicate in the target language to build their confidence and skills. Instruction will be entirely in the target language to support the students' efforts towards this goal. Elements of culture will be woven into instructional units to give students an appreciation of customs, foods, music and other aspects of life. Grade 7 World Language courses are offered daily for the entire school year.

Art – One Quarter

Instruction aims to develop a strong basic vocabulary of expression as your child continues to explore the use of creative materials, improves technical abilities and resolves more complicated visual problems. Concepts include greater understanding of color theory, the use of perspective techniques to create the illusion of depth and using value changes and shading to indicate form. The development of balanced compositions continues to be stressed. Drawing from observation is encouraged through still life models and landscape drawing assignments. An interdisciplinary view of art and the history of American art provide connections with other curriculum areas.

Home and Careers – One Quarter

The seventh grade curriculum is comprised of three different units: American Red Cross Babysitting, career and financial awareness, foods and nutrition. During the babysitting unit, your child will assess his or her own strengths and abilities as he or she develops a personal resume for a babysitting job. Using anatomically correct dolls, your child will practice basic child care such as diapering and feeding, and first aid techniques such as assisting a choking child. Safety and the selection of age-appropriate play activities are also discussed. For a fee, a child who successfully completes the requirements can become a Certified Red Cross Babysitter.

One of the goals of the career and financial awareness unit is to increase respect for all types of careers. In a simulated activity, your child will be assigned a career for which he or she must design a business card, develop a monthly budget based on assigned income, write checks, and keep a check register. In foods and nutrition, the emphasis is on safety, the proper use of equipment, use of correct measuring and mixing techniques, clean up, sanitation and kitchen organization. Your child will work collaboratively to plan and prepare food based on classroom demonstration.

Technology 7 – Two Quarters

The emphasis of the Technology 7 curriculum is the integration of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Student will engage in hands-on building and problem solving activities. Tech 7 focuses on the following areas: An Introduction to Technical Drawing; Engineering Structures; Simple Machines; Catapults; Hydroponics; as well as Inventors and Inventions. Safety is a major priority in the Technology labs. All students are required to demonstrate their knowledge of the equipment and proper procedures before being allowed to operate any of the machinery. Students will work both individually and in teams to research, design and construct a prototype that fulfills each project's guidelines.

Problem solving, construction skills, organizational skills, resourcefulness, logical thinking and working cooperatively with group members are all practiced daily in the Technology classroom. Many student projects will be exhibited throughout the year in special showcases in the Middle School and in the District Art Gallery at the Community Center.

Health Education

Middle School Health Education classes are designed to give students information about contemporary health issues, factual information and to learn about the decision making process. High risk behaviors and their consequences are explored at great length. Our health education courses offer an activity-based curriculum, in which students are afforded the opportunity to work in small groups on various research projects. A basic understanding of wellness is enhanced, as the students assist one another in recognizing the influential forces that act upon them, such as advertising and peer pressure. Topics covered are as follows, but not limited to: stress management, food and fitness, drugs and alcohol, communication, decision making, dating and relationships, sex education, male and female reproductive systems.

Computers

The Computer class is specifically designed to cover the Google Suite of applications. In this course, students learn about Google Documents, Google Spreadsheets and Google Presentations. Google documents allow students to work on online documents in the cloud and learn to create, edit and share their work. Google Spreadsheets allows students to create tallies, charts and graphs. Google Presentations help students express themselves in a slide presentation format while incorporating skills in text, editing, animations and transitions. Learning this suite of software equips students with key 21st century skills. It is worth noting that since every student has a Herricks Google Account, this class is managed via Google Classroom which is an online tool that enhances student and teacher productivity and workflow.

While the majority of curriculum encompasses Google's productivity suite, other websites and other web topics are also discussed such as Internet Research, Internet Safety and other Web 2.0 tools.

Music

Your child will experience music in one of the four course offerings: band, chorus, orchestra, or general music. In music, it is our goal to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make music a meaningful part of everyday life. Students with prior experience playing an instrument can be a member of the band or orchestra. In the performing groups, students develop ensemble skills as well as enhance their individual skills.

The performing groups are featured in evening concerts each year during the months of December and May. Because each member of the ensemble is important, all students are required to participate in these performances. Students enrolled in band or orchestra will also attend one sectional (group lesson) per week. During sectionals time, students will receive individualized attention to help them become more successful in playing their instrument. Sectionals are scheduled during the school day on a rotating basis. Each year will expand on musical concepts from the previous year.

Physical Education

Your child will be introduced to a variety of activities during their physical education class. Our program is fitness oriented in nature, but it provides students the opportunity to experience problem solving tasks, sports oriented games, cooperative activities, team and individual sports and lifetime activities. Proper attire is expected of every child participating in physical education. This should include: athletic socks, sneakers, athletic shorts or sweat pants, a T-shirt or sweat shirt. To help ensure safety, we ask all students to refrain from wearing jewelry during physical education class. Every student is issued a physical education locker. Students may keep a change of clothing in their locker to wear during physical education class. We strongly recommend the students bring a change of clothing on a regular basis for physical education class. We also recommend that students keep their personal belongings in their locker during physical education class.

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EIGHTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Language Arts

The Eighth Grade English Language Arts program is one filled with analytical reading, powerful writing, and insightful discussions. Skills for processed as well as timed writing are emphasized, particularly organizing, drafting, developing, revising, and editing. Students are introduced to a variety of texts, both fiction and nonfiction, including novels, short stories, poems, essays, and articles. A strong emphasis is placed on creating, writing, and defending arguments for both fiction and nonfiction texts. Students are encouraged to explore and challenge their independent reading choices. In addition, research skills are refined and broadened to prepare students for the rigors of high school.

Math

The Grade 8 Math curriculum is based on the NYS Common Core State Standards for Grade 7. This pre-algebra course focuses working with expressions, solving equations and systems of equations; exponents, radicals and functions. Students will examine Geometry concepts of congruence, similarity and transformations. ***Students take the NYS Grade 8 Math Assessment.***

The Honors Math 8 curriculum is based on the NYS Common Core curriculum for Geometry. This Geometry course focuses on constructions, proofs and transformations. Students explore more complex geometric situations and deepen their explanations of geometric relationships, moving towards formal mathematical arguments. Topics include trigonometry, circles and coordinate geometry. Throughout the course th emphasis is on justifying and proving arguments formally. The students in this course are required to write a research paper in Mathematics. ***Students take the CC Geometry Regents exam in June.***

The Grade 8 Algebra course is based on the NYS Common Core Standards for 8th grade and Algebra I. This compacted, rigorous and fast paced curriculum focuses on in-depth understanding of functions and problem solving with polynomial, linear, exponential and quadratic functions. Students will study properties of exponents, operations with polynomial expressions, rational and irrational numbers. Students will examine Geometry concepts of congruence, similarity and transformations. Modeling with mathematics and problem solving are emphasized in this course. The use of a graphing calculator is required. ***Students take the CC Algebra I Regents exam in June.***

Science

Eighth grade science is divided into two courses:

Our eighth grade **Physical Science** course is designed to explore many areas of the physical world. Students are introduced to units focusing on an introduction to energy and energy resources, minerals, rocks, plate tectonics, Earth and its relationship to celestial phenomena. This course is laboratory centered; students will explore the several types of energy, examine various examples of rocks and minerals and learn about the Earth and its relationships within the celestial sphere. Students enrolled in this course will take the New York State Intermediate Level Science Exam at the end of eighth grade.

Earth Science is a high school level course that follows the New York State Earth Science Regents curriculum. Many of the areas of study included within this curriculum are: Meteorology, Geology, Astronomy, Plate Tectonics and a wide variety of related topics. Students have seven and a half periods of science per week, with a minimum of 30 hours of laboratory required experiments. The New York State Earth Science Regents Exam is the culminating assessment for this course. The final grade in this course is recorded on the high school transcript. Admission to this course requires the recommendation of the student's seventh grade science teacher. This recommendation is based on the student's overall excellent academic performance.

Social Studies

The eighth grade course is a continuation of the seventh grade course beginning with the Civil War. The major units are the Reconstruction Period after the Civil War, industrialization in the 1880's, and the United States as a world power, the United States between wars, and the United States assumes world responsibilities and life in an era of transition. Information about New York State, Canada and Mexico are incorporated. Skill development in reading maps and globes, researching, writing, listening, reading primary and secondary source material, and evaluating media is continued throughout the year.

World Language

After two years of studying French, Italian, Chinese, or Spanish grade 8 students progress in their ability to communicate in and understand their chosen language. A wide variety of activities that build on those used in grades 6 and 7 will keep students immersed in the language and give them multiple opportunities to continue to increase their confidence and skills. Communication skills are fostered by exploring topics that will prepare students for their continued language study in the high school. An increased emphasis on culture will deepen students' understanding of life in the countries whose language they are studying.

Grade 8 World Language courses are offered daily for the entire school year. Grade 8 courses culminate in the Checkpoint A exam; students receive one Regents level credit for passing Grade 8 World Language and the Checkpoint A exam.

Art – One Quarter

Art projects become more challenging and expose your child to more sophisticated materials and techniques. Through careful observation and the use of visual references, your child is encouraged to personalize work and develop images that are increasingly more unique and artistic. Your child is expected to use a basic art vocabulary to discuss and analyze his or her own work and that of others. Awareness of the power of art as communication continues to grow. Art concepts include facial proportion, the effective use of elements such as line, shape, focal point, color, rhythm and pattern in composition and design, and the use of perspective techniques to create the illusion of depth. An interdisciplinary view of art and the history of twentieth century art provide connections with other curriculum areas.

Home and Careers – One Quarter

The eighth grade curriculum includes units on Career Exploration, Consumerism and Advertising, along with Food and Nutrition. Students are engaged in researching two separate careers they may be interested in pursuing in the future. Students work with the librarian to create charts, compare and contrast various career choices, develop a bibliography and learn how to use new computer software programs (i.e. Noodle Tools). Student reflection on the suitability of the career choice to their own personal goals and strengths is an important outcome of this unit. In Consumerism and Advertising, the effects of advertising on buying are studied. The focus of the Foods and Nutrition unit is on healthy lifestyle choices. Using the cookbook, **The Sneaky Chef**, students will learn how to create a variety of food items using recipes that “hide” the healthy ingredients, replacing those high in sugar, sodium and fat. Another activity focuses on the Common Core; The Recipe Research Project. Students will research and evaluate recipes in order to prepare a healthy, cost effective breakfast or lunch that includes their “key ingredient.” Reading and interpreting directions, the demonstration of proper measuring and preparation techniques as well as the proper use of tools and equipment, are all integrated in the lessons.

Technology 8 – One Quarter

The emphasis of the Technology 8 curriculum continues to be the integration of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Students will engage in more advanced hands-on building and problem solving activities.

Tech 8 focuses on the following areas: Technical Drawing; Egg Crash Cars and Vehicle Safety; and Robotics; Safety procedures are all reviewed, and students must pass a safety test in order to work on the equipment. Students will work both individually and in teams to research, design and construct a prototype that fulfills each project's guidelines. Problem solving, construction skills, organizational skills, resourcefulness, logical thinking and working cooperatively with group members are all practiced daily in the Technology classroom. Many student projects will be exhibited throughout the year in special showcases in the Middle School and in the District Art Gallery at the Community Center.

Health Education

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GRADING

Report Cards

Students receive four report cards per year in the middle school;. Report cards provide students with a final quarter letter grade for each different academic area. Interim progress reports are provided at the five-week point of each marking period to help you monitor your child's progress. Report cards are made available on the parent portal at www.herricks.org/parentportal.

The grading point system is as follows:

A+	=	4.0
A	=	3.6
B+	=	3.3
B	=	3.0
C+	=	2.5
C	=	2.0
D	=	1.0
F	=	0.0

Honor Roll

The Middle School Honor Roll is published at the conclusion of every marking period and recognizes academic excellence on the part of our students. Your child must earn a grade point average of 3.66 or higher in order to qualify to appear on the Honor Roll.

The National Junior Honor Society

The National Junior Honor Society is comprised of seventh and eighth grade students who achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.66 or higher over the first three quarters of the year. Accelerated and honors classes are weighted when quarterly averages are calculated. In addition, these students must also demonstrate outstanding citizenship, leadership, character and evidence of service.

If your child hopes to be considered for induction into this organization, he or she should make an effort to meet the selection criteria during seventh and eighth grade. In accordance with the National Junior Honor Society Charter, students are evaluated for selection by a faculty committee based on information gathered from teachers in all areas of study, including non-academic specials. All students selected for induction participate in the induction ceremony which takes place in May. Once inducted, students must continue to meet all requirements in order to maintain membership.

Each year the Eighth Grade Awards Ceremony takes place with the National Junior Honor Society induction. Each academic team and elective discipline recognizes students for outstanding achievement. Criteria for consideration for an award include academic performance, effort and character.

Peer Tutoring Program

National Junior Honor Society members provide tutoring for students in need of academic support. The program involves:

- Weekly tutoring for a six week period
- Parental permission
- Certificate of completion for both students

ENGLISH AS A NEW LANGUAGE

The work of the English as a New Language (ENL) teacher is to provide appropriate support for their students and to work with content area teachers to make language and content available to ELLs at their current level of proficiency. We believe that through dialogue and a shared understanding of curriculum at all levels with classroom teachers, guidance counselors and administrators, students in our ENL/ESL Program are provided with differentiated and carefully scaffolded activities and assessments to help improve and develop English language skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking and at the same time, master the content. We provide push-in services so that we can meet the needs of our ELLs by pairing a content area teacher with an ESL teacher in order to make content comprehensible; this approach is beneficial to all students, ELLs and native speakers of English. ELLs are also pulled-out or scheduled for an ENL / ESL class for more targeted support. Push-in or pull-out services are determined at each building in order to best meet the needs of their students.

To measure their growth in the English language, ELLs take The New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test yearly in order to determine their level of proficiency. Once a student reaches the level of Proficient / Commanding, he/she is then exited from ENL / ESL services, but the district is required to support ELLs for an additional two years. Our ultimate goal is to see ELLs exit our ENL / ESL program and to ensure academic success and social and emotional well-being.

LANGUAGE IMMERSION

An Overview of the Language Immersion Program at Herricks Middle School (Currently in grade six)

As the students progress to the Middle School from our elementary immersion program at Denton Avenue, they will take a specifically-designed Spanish class that will strengthen and expand their proficiency in the language. As a means of offering another opportunity to use the Spanish language, students will have the content of our 6th grade Social Studies class delivered in Spanish. The semester courses of Health and Art will be delivered in both English and Spanish to provide students with the content, but equally important, focus on the social language that these two courses provide due to their themes. Bilinguals students need a balance of academic and social language to function when they interact with native speakers of Spanish.

6th Grade Schedule

The Spanish Immersion program at Herricks Middle School provides students with the following course offerings in grade six:

English Language Arts - content delivered in English

Social Studies - content delivered in Spanish

Mathematics - content delivered in English

Spanish - 1. targeted instruction to build proficiency and accuracy 2. provide the language needed to support the academic content areas

Health - content delivered in English and in Spanish

Art - content delivered in English and in Spanish

Music - content delivered in English

Physical Education - content delivered in English

Research

According to research, one can define several advantages associated with immersion programs. These advantages include:

- A greater measure of cognitive flexibility and creative/divergent thinking skills
- Development of more intense listening skills
- Transfer skills in many curriculum areas. Vocabulary development in English is especially enhanced by learning a romance language at any early age
- Development of fluency in a world language in a natural setting, with fluency being the by-product
- Development of a greater degree of cross-cultural acceptance through the understanding that the diverse peoples of the world speak diverse languages, and that learning a world language can bring us in touch with the world around us in a very personal way.

SPECIAL EDUCATION/READING

The middle school's Special Education/Reading Department coordinates the provision of services for students with special needs. Our school offers a full continuum of services for classified students, including consultant teacher services, Resource Room services, inclusion and co-teaching classes, self-contained Individual Development classes, and a Life Skills class for developmentally delayed youngsters. To be placed in one of these special education settings, your child must be referred to, evaluated by, and recommended by the Committee on Special Education.

There are related services available, such as speech and language therapy, occupational and physical therapies and counseling, which provide support and remediation for those students in need of specialized support.

We provide reading programs to address specific learning disabilities from a multi-sensory reading program to improve decoding to a 90 minute literacy block addressing vocabulary, comprehension and spelling.

If you have questions about our programs, or would like to know more about services for your child, call the chairperson of the Special Education Department at 305-8629. The New York State Parent Guide is also a valuable source of information for parents of children with special needs. You can request a copy of the guide from the Special Education Department or a school psychologist.

PARENT TIPS

Homework is one of the most powerful tools that can be used to ensure your child's success in school. As you know, the purpose of homework is to reinforce and extend what teachers have taught in the classroom. Parents can help in the following ways:

- Provide a study environment where your child can work quietly with good lighting, room for materials, and freedom from distractions.
- Consider with your child the amount of homework to be done as well as extra-curricular commitments and plan a realistic weekly homework schedule.
- Have a calendar in your child's room to help them begin to organize due dates, test dates, etc.
- Be sure assignments are clearly written in your child's agenda book to help build good organizational skills.
- Offer positive reinforcement and encouragement. Emphasize the value of homework in helping your child establish routines and structure.
- Grant your child "free time" when he/she has completed all homework assignments.
- Periodically check your child's progress with his/her teachers and counselor. Keep communication open.
- Provide academic support when needed. Ask for resources from the school.
- Provide a supply box or drawer with all school supplies to have within reach.
- Congratulate your child's accomplishments to help build their academic confidence.

Raising children has become more and more challenging in today's world. As parents and educators, we want the best for our children. Our common goal is to develop independent young adults who are both academically and emotionally successful. Parents can help in the following ways:

- Provide your child with opportunities to make their own decisions to help foster independence.
- Give your child space to sort things out for themselves to help build their decision making skills. Allow them to make mistakes along the way.
- Set reasonable limits and rules that are consistent, and rooted in your beliefs and values.
- Respect your teenager's privacy and check on things when you are worried.
- Get to know your child's friends and don't judge their relationships.

- Listen more and question less. You will learn more from your child by simply listening and observing than asking them questions.
- Recognize and compliment your child's strengths in all areas to help build their emotional confidence.
- Be aware of your child's socialization on the computer. This should not be private as the internet is public to the entire world. Parents should have access to their child's communications for their physical and emotional safety.
- Enjoy your child's company and value who they are as a person, not just as a student.
- Help your child identify their talents, skills and interests and get them involved in some peer related activities to help foster those areas and build their confidence socially and emotionally.
- Spend time together as a family eating, talking and socializing to help build their social skills.
- Talk to your children about alcohol, drugs, and sex. Use TV shows, news articles, movies, books, and related current incidents to help open these conversations. Ask for resources from the school to help guide these conversations if needed.
- Realize that all children are a work in progress and the journey to becoming a successful adult will take many tears, laughs, hugs, disagreements, worries, failures and accomplishments.
- Be involved in your child's life both in and out of school. Children develop a sense of being valued when parents show their interest.
- Remember to disconnect. Too much technology can prevent your tween from interacting with people in real life. It can also interfere with sleep and physical activity. Consider these suggestions for keeping her tech time in balance:
 - Make a ratio rule. For example, you could say for every half hour your child spends on the computer, she should spend an hour doing something else, such as riding bikes or playing the guitar.
 - Create digital-free zones. You might say no cell phones or tablets at the dinner table or in restaurants.
 - Insist that devices go off at bedtime. Children could stay up for hours playing games or watching videos. They can also be awakened by tests or sleep lightly in anticipation of them. *Idea:* Try setting up a family charging station where everyone must leave their devices.
- Lastly, remember that you can never tell your child you love them enough! Even when they are rolling their eyes at you, they are listening to those most important words.