Program of Studies
2020-2021
Mission

Statement

Eastchester
Middle
School is committed to providing a rigorous academic program within a safe, supportive, and understanding learning community.

Beliefs

Our aim is to guide students effectively toward becoming responsible, competent, and respectful young adults with a sense of enthusiasm and purpose.

We believe that all students:

❖ Deserve a positive, safe, nurturing, and supportive learning environment
❖ Can be motivated to learn, lead, and excel
❖ Benefit from a challenging academic program and are enriched by co-curricular activities
❖ Learn in different ways and at different times
❖ Possess unique gifts
❖ Have far-reaching potential to learn and grow
❖ Thrive with personal attention and recognition
❖ Benefit from collaboration between parents, staff, and themselves
❖ Deserve an education that promotes a healthy lifestyle

Vision

We see our students as individuals who are willing to take chances and challenge themselves in order to become valued members and leaders of their community.

We want our students to:

❖ Set high standards
❖ Take risks, become well-rounded, and explore new opportunities
❖ Establish a prideful work ethic and exercise strong time management skills
❖ Develop personal responsibility, a love of learning, and problem-solving strategies
❖ Appreciate the connections between rules, rights, and responsibilities
❖ Practice civility, tolerance, and respect
❖ Understand and respect boundaries
❖ Engage in healthy, meaningful social relationships
❖ Develop meaningful connections to their community

Expectations

We seek to create a learning community that is nurturing and challenging, where students are guided in taking risks within a supportive, forgiving climate.

Our school will:

❖ Create a safe and secure environment where all students can learn
❖ Inspire high student achievement that exceeds state learning standards
❖ Provide instruction that allows each child to excel as an individual
❖ Encourage students to be self-motivated and constantly strive to reach their full potential
❖ Recognize the diverse qualities that make each child unique
❖ Strive to provide opportunities for students to grow socially and emotionally
❖ Reinforce civic responsibility and promote leadership through character education
❖ Foster collaborative relationships among the family, school, and community
❖ Exemplify a commitment to lifelong learning
A Message from the Principal

September 1, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

As each class passes through Eastchester Middle School, it becomes more and more apparent how important a well-rounded education is to the success of each student. Eastchester Middle School has a standing tradition of offering all students the opportunity to explore all areas of academic and co-curricular interest; further, each student should expect to accomplish this in an environment that not only encourages this notion, but also fosters respect, tolerance, and achievement.

The 2020-2021 Eastchester Middle School Program of Studies provides you with information regarding available courses and support services and serves as a resource to you throughout the school year. Please take the time to review this guide with your child.

The Eastchester Middle School counselors, teachers, and administrators will work with you and your child to ensure continued success in meeting course requirements at the highest possible levels and to be certain that your child’s 2020-2021 school year meets and exceeds individual interests and needs. We look forward to supporting the success of your child and working with you as partners.

Respectfully,

Josh Elder
Principal

“Eastchester Middle School is committed to providing a rigorous academic program within a safe, supportive, and understanding learning community.”
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Program Requirements

The Middle School curriculum is carefully designed to meet the educational and social needs of the early adolescent student. Various teaching methods and techniques are used including team teaching, individualized instruction, small group instruction, and use of audio-visual materials. The instructional program is designed to make the learning experience interesting and exciting, and a wide range of academic programs is offered.

Below you will find a list of courses available at each grade level. For details on course content, please view the course descriptions that follow.

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**Music Options:**

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Homework Guidelines

Homework encourages student self-discipline, independence, and responsibility. It also reinforces, supplements, and extends school learning, serves as a “conversation” between student and teacher, and allows teachers to monitor the progress of students in the curriculum. Effective homework will be meaningful and designed to challenge each student at his or her level of ability. Whenever possible, teachers will be cognizant of the impact that homework has on family life.

Homework should:
- Have a clear purpose with value.
- Incorporate both review and newly learned material.
- Encourage some degree of independence.
- Receive teacher feedback, as such feedback has been found to influence completion rates and overall success.
- Involve parents through their provision of encouragement, appropriate materials, and an environment that is conducive to learning.

Students can expect an increasing amount of homework during their years at EMS. The time involved in doing this work cannot be precisely determined since assignments vary and students will work at different rates. On average, reasonable expectations for time spent on home will range between 60-80 minutes per night.

Please note that students enrolled in honors and/or accelerated courses should expect homework amounts that tend toward the high end of the above range.
Progress Reporting

*Interim Progress Reports*

Interim reports are sent home to call attention to areas of notable success or to call attention to areas that need improvement. The reports are sent to all students in the middle of each marking period.

*Report Cards*

Report cards are mailed home four times during the year, approximately every ten weeks. At the end of the year a final mark is computed that includes the grade received in each of the four marking periods and also the final exam score (if applicable). The passing final average for all subjects is 65%. Final grades are calculated as follows:

**6th Grade:** Each marking period weighted 25% (4 x 25=100%), final exam accounting for 20% of 4th quarter grade.

**7th Grade:** Each marking period weighted 22.5% (4 x 22.5 = 90%), final exam counts for 10% of final grade.

**8th Grade:** Each marking period weighted 20% (4 x 20=80%), final exam counting for 20% of final grade.

*Honor Roll*

The following are criteria for placement on the E.M.S. Honor Roll in grades 7 and 8:

- An overall average of 85% or higher, with no grade on the report card below 75%.

*High Honor Roll*

The following are criteria for placement on the E.M.S. High Honor Roll in grades 7 and 8:

- An overall average of 92% or higher, with no grade on the report card below 85%.
English Language Arts

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy lay out a vision of what it means to be literate in the twenty-first century. The skills and understandings students are expected to demonstrate have wide applicability outside the classroom or workplace. Students who meet the Standards readily undertake the close, attentive reading that is at the heart of understanding and enjoying complex works of literature. In short, students who meet the Standards develop the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundation for any creative and purposeful expression in language.

The English/Language Arts program is designed to provide strategies that will enable each Middle School student to become an avid and capable reader, writer, speaker, listener, and thinker. The development of these skills is central to learning in all areas of the curriculum. The program includes the following aspects of language arts:

- **Reading**: Text complexity and the growth of comprehension (literature and informational text)
- **Writing**: Text types, responding to reading, and research speaking
- **Speaking and Listening**: flexible communication and collaboration
- **Language**: Conventions, effective use, and vocabulary

Emphasis in reading is placed on the ability to read with comprehension and appreciate different genres of literature. Some literature selections are integrated with other curriculum areas.

The writing program stresses the development of each student's writing proficiency. Correct usage and mechanics are emphasized in the writing program to strengthen the student's understanding of the specific structure of the English language. Literature serves as a model for students' writing processes. A consistent writing rubric is used in grades 6-8. This rubric outlines writing expectations and skills for students, and is used for on-going writing assessment.

The ELA program also includes test-taking strategies and practice to prepare students for the New York State ELA Test. Since the 2005-06 school year, students in grades 6 and 7 have joined grade 8 students in taking the NYS ELA Test.
**Grade 6 English Language Arts**

Through the use of core novels and book clubs, students learn by reading literature that represents a variety of genres, including:

- Realistic fiction
- Historical fiction
- Science fiction/Fantasy
- Biography/Autobiography
- Poetry

Additional titles are read by students individually and in small and large groups. Myths and legends are also among the various genres taught at the sixth grade level. Language Arts classes are designed to create an environment where enthusiastic readers and writers can pursue reading and writing to the fullest extent of their capabilities. Vocabulary is taught within the context of the ELA program.

Students are expected to participate actively in discussions about the books they are reading. They are also encouraged to read at home to meet the New York State Department of Education’s recommendation to read approximately 25 books per year.

Students write essays, journal entries, letters, fiction, and memoirs based on the need to write for information, social interaction, literary response, and critical analysis. The writing program is designed to teach children to write based on the following process model:

- Selecting topics and genre
- Prewriting, including graphic organizers
- Preparing drafts
- Revising content
- Editing for usage and mechanics (punctuation, spelling, grammar, and paragraphing)
- Preparing the finished product

Students take the NYS Grade 6 ELA Test in April.

**Grade 7 English Language Arts**

Students read core reading selections including fiction and drama. Students also read poetry, non-fiction, short stories, and essays. The course objectives for reading are: to enable students to analyze literature, to read for information, and to respond to various genres of writing. Periodicals and Internet sources are read as supplemental texts. Vocabulary is developed in the context of the reading assignments. Additional reading at home is encouraged to promote life-long literacy.

Writing assignments include: literary responses, essays, and social correspondence. Prewriting organizational skills are taught through the use of graphic organizers, and outlines. Peer conferences
are used to aid students in their revising processes. Standard written English is expected after the editing process.

Group projects and oral presentations are also incorporated into the curriculum. Active listening skills and note-taking skills are honed. Critical reading skills are taught through the use of annotations and double entries.

Students take the NYS Grade 7 ELA Test in April.

**Grade 8 English Language Arts**

Literature studied encompasses all genres and includes both the required core selections and additional titles. Students analyze literature as they develop comprehension, critical thinking, and vocabulary skills.

Student writing covers the expository essay, the personal essay, reports, and creative writing. Spelling, usage, grammar, and mechanics are taught in the context of students' writing. Students are encouraged to enter various writing contests, and student work in various formats is shared with other students. When appropriate and possible, the curriculum is supplemented by cultural activities.

Students continue to work toward mastery of the same ELA skills that were introduced to them in the seventh grade. The content is more difficult, and the level of expectations is higher.

Students read core reading selections including fiction and drama. Students also read poetry, non-fiction, short stories, and essays. The course objectives for reading are: to enable students to analyze literature, to read for information, and to respond to various genres of writing. Periodicals and Internet sources are read as supplemental texts. Vocabulary is often taught in the context of the reading assignments. Additional reading at home is encouraged to promote life-long literacy.

Writing assignments include: research reports, literary responses, poetry, essays, and social correspondence. Prewriting organizational skills are taught through the use of graphic organizers, and outlines. Peer conferences are used to aid students in their revising processes. Standard written English is expected after the editing process. Each student will keep a writing portfolio.

Group projects and oral presentations are also incorporated into the curriculum. Active listening skills and note-taking skills are honed. Critical reading skills are taught through the use of annotations and double entries.

Students take the NYS Grade 8 ELA Test in April.
**STEM Communication – Grade 6**

In life, no matter your occupation, at some point you will be asked to deliver a presentation. In order for you to be an effective speaker, your communication, verbal, nonverbal, and written must be consistent. Mastery of the skills used in public speaking will greatly enhance your chances of being understood. Effective oral communication with an emphasis on speech preparation and presentation skills is important for students as they leave middle school and move into high school academia.

This course will provide students with a basic introduction to public speaking, designed to develop their communication skills and delivery of public speeches in a safe, supportive learning environment. Students will learn to research, prepare, deliver and evaluate different kinds of presentations, including self-evaluation, through basic video production.

**Independent Inquiry & Research - Grade 7**

Students in grade 7 develop their self-directed, independent inquiry, communication, information and digital literacy skills and strategies through individual and small group investigation of a problem, issue or theme that is derived from the regular classroom curriculum, contemporary subjects or personal interests.

**Productive Thinking – Grade 8**

The Productive Thinking course stimulates critical and creative thinking skills, encourages students to develop a vision for the future, and prepares students for leadership roles. Future Problem Solving engages students in creative problem solving within the curriculum leveraging real world scenarios and current issues.

**Summer Reading**

Independent reading is an integral part of the Middle School ELA program. The ELA department requires students to read one selected book and recommends that all students read at least one book from the suggested reading list over the summer. By reading two books over the summer, a student will have completed his/her first required independent reading assignment, which is due during the first weeks of school for all Middle School students. At the end of every school year a summer reading list is distributed to Eastchester Middle School students.

The ELA Department recommends that students use the summer to complete this reading assignment at a more leisurely pace rather than wait until school starts in September. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 will be required to complete an in-class activity based on this independent reading in September.
P.O.W.E.R Writing Lab Grades 6-8

The P.O.W.E.R Writing Lab provides an opportunity for students to work on any aspect of the writing process: planning, organization, writing, editing and/or revising. The laboratory period is not credit bearing.

*Humanities Academic Intervention Service (AIS) – Grades 6-8*

In addition to taking regular ELA classes, some students are identified and placed in this program to address remediation in reading comprehension and writing skills as identified by teacher referral and/or standardized test scores. In small group or individual learning settings, students’ needs are assessed, and remediation is provided. Instruction in the Humanities AIS is instructional and closely targets student needs in an individualized learning environment. This course is graded on a pass/fail basis.
The mathematics program at Eastchester Middle School strives to develop students’ problem-solving skills, confidence in their mathematical ability and appreciation of the relevance of mathematics to today’s society. Students are offered a sequential program of study that stresses an understanding of processes, facts, and concepts. In alignment with Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics, higher-order critical thinking skills are introduced at every level to stimulate student interest and participation.

The goal of the mathematics department is to motivate the students in our middle school to continue in future mathematics classes with enthusiasm, skill, and confidence. Each student will learn mathematical concepts at different rates and in different ways. Some will readily achieve success; other will need further practice, instruction or assistance over time. In either case, mathematics department members will be available to support students in their continued growth.

**Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics**

The Standards set grade-specific standards defining what students should understand and be able to do in their study of mathematics. The goal is to provide students with the knowledge and understanding of the mathematics necessary to function in a world very dependent upon the application of mathematics. The Standards emphasized during grades 6-8 are as follows:

- Rations and Proportional Relationships
- The Number System
- Expressions and Equations
- Geometry
- Statistics and Probability

Additionally, NYS mathematics standards state that students will:

- understand the concepts of and become proficient with the skills of mathematics;
- communicate and reason mathematically;
- become problem solvers by using appropriate tools and strategies through the integrated study of number sense and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and statistics and probability.

Conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem solving are represented as process strands and content strands.

**Process Strands:** The process strands (Problem Solving, Reasoning and Proof, Communication, Connections, and Representation) highlight ways of acquiring and using content knowledge.
**Content Strands:** The content strands (Number Sense and Operations, Algebra, Geometry, Measurement, and Statistics and Probability) explicitly describe the content that students should learn.

Students will only become successful in mathematics if they see mathematics as a whole, not as isolated skills and facts. They will use stories, manipulatives, and technology as they develop an understanding of the content and process strands.

**Grade 6 Mathematics**

The 6th grade mathematics curriculum reinforces fundamental skills in computing with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percents. Students are introduced to the study of probability, geometry, graphing, fundamental concepts of integers, algebra, and measurement of capacity in both U.S. and metric systems. All aspects of the curriculum will emphasize the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to integrate these skills into academics and everyday life experiences. Mental arithmetic proficiency and consumer math competencies will be addressed across the curriculum.

Students are assessed through in class examinations, projects, classroom performance, and anecdotal data.

All students will take the New York State Mathematics Test in May. Preparation for this assessment is incorporated into the curriculum.

**Grade 7 Mathematics**

This course is designed to stimulate and motivate each child’s inquisitiveness in mathematics. Students are expected to have mastered computational skills with decimals and fractions. A mastery of integral numbers and an expansion of problem-solving strategies will include a process for decision making with algebraic applications emphasized.

Additional topics include probability and statistics, ratios and percents, metric geometry, graphing solutions of linear equations, numeration, number theory, and introductory logic. Written expression of mathematical procedures and drawing conclusions from representative data are integral components of this program. Students will use a scientific calculator for selected classroom activities.

All students will take the New York State Mathematics Test in May. Preparation for this assessment is incorporated into the curriculum. Students will also take a locally developed final exam in June which will count for 10% of the overall course grade.
Grade 8 Mathematics

This course is designed for students to develop proficiency in the fundamental mathematics skills needed in an increasingly technical society. Problem-solving strategies are studied to enhance each student's ability to use mathematics as a tool to solve real problems that occur in the world around us. Students will master operations with integers, rational expressions, decimals, ratio and proportion, and percents. Also, students will receive an extensive introduction to algebra. In addition, this curriculum includes topics on plane and transformational geometry, probability and statistics, and basic algebraic concepts. Studying these topics ensures a strong foundation for students' future mathematics courses. Students in this course will take Algebra I in their freshman year of high school.

All students are required to take the New York State Mathematics Test in May. Preparation for this assessment is incorporated into the curriculum.

Grade 8 Mathematics - Algebra I

This course is a Regents level math course covering the New York State Core Curriculum for Integrated Algebra. The course provides a strong foundation in elementary algebra, functions and their graphs, and statistics. Topics include: equations and inequalities, operations with polynomials, factoring and quadratics, and systems of equations, with emphasis on using these skills to solve contextual problems.

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<tr>
<td>❖ Problem Solving</td>
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<td>❖ Number Sense and Operations</td>
<td>❖ Statistics and Probability</td>
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<td>❖ Algebra</td>
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<td>❖ Geometry</td>
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Students will take the Algebra I Regents Exam in June. Successful completion of this course earns students one high school mathematics credit. Students will also take the Grade 8 New York State Mathematics Test in May. Preparation for this assessment is incorporated into the curriculum.

Mathematics Academic Intervention Service (AIS) – Grades 6-8

In addition to taking regular math classes, some students are identified and placed in this program to address remediation needs as identified by teacher referral and/or standardized test scores. In small group or individual learning settings, students' needs are assessed, and remediation is provided. Instruction in the math learning lab is instructional and closely targets student needs in an individualized learning environment. This course is graded on a pass/fail basis.
Science

Grade 6 Science

The 6th grade science program is designed to provide students with a strong foundation in science. This foundation is essential in creating students who will be motivated, able to think critically, and possess the ability to work in cooperative and independent environments.

The students will be provided with information necessary for success in modern society. The curriculum includes the following major topics of study:

- Density
- Newton's Laws
- Kinetic Energy
- Potential Energy
- Energy Transfer
- Photosynthesis
- Cell Theory
- Cell Functions
- Animal Behaviors
- Plant Structure
- Matter Cycling and Energy Flow
- Ecosytems
- Biodiversity
- Resources
- Synthetic Materials

Emphasis will be placed on developing the student's critical thinking skills.

During the course of the year, a wide variety of hands-on activities are implemented in the classroom. This process approach, coupled with Discovery Streaming and other videos, packets and alternative resources, is designed to relate the curriculum to the students' lives. This approach provides a firm foundation and motivation for further study in science.

The major areas of study in the 6th grade science curriculum are centered on topics that impact the lives and interests of students in this age group. The theme of interdependence runs throughout the school year.

During all units of study, the following science skills are emphasized:

- Generalizing
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Predicting
- Inferring
- Analyzing
- Observing
- Classifying
- Communicating
- Cooperating
- Modeling
- Researching

Students will be responsible for ultimately forming conclusions based on all of the above science skills.
**Grade 7 Science**

Seventh grade science focuses on life science and chemistry to help students understand how science affects our lives and our environment. Course content is aligned with the New York State Core Curriculum.

Curriculum topics include:

- Atomic Structure
- Elements, Compounds & Mixtures
- States of Matter
- Chemical Reactions
- Conservation of Matter
- Magnetism
- Electric Circuits
- Human Body Systems
- Cellular Respiration
- Genetics

This course aims to instill students with an appreciation of science and its importance to understanding the world around us. Students will become conversant with the fundamental principles of biology, physics, and chemistry, and will be asked to employ this knowledge in critical thinking and problem-solving exercises.

Through hands-on laboratory experience, students will learn how to design an effective experiment, how to use basic scientific equipment, and how to gather, analyze, and summarize data. Course objectives will additionally be achieved through interactive SMART Board presentations, class discussions, inquiry investigations, and analysis of current events.

**Grade 8 Science - Intermediate Level Science**

Intermediate Level 8th grade Science consists of a survey of Earth Science and follows the New York State Core Curriculum. The curriculum is created for students to acquire a direct understanding of the Earth including the hydrosphere, lithosphere, atmosphere, and the solar system. The objectives are achieved by way of class discussions, current events, student projects, and laboratory investigations.

The goal of the course is to have students understand their place within the natural environment. "Respect, Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle" will be stressed as a method to achieve this goal. The scientific method of solving problems is implemented through many class investigations.
The curriculum includes the following topics of study:

- Skills of Scientists
- Energy Cycling & Conservation
- Rock Cycle
- Dynamic Earth
- Geologic Time
- Weather
- Environmental Awareness
- Astronomy

ILS concludes with the New York State Science Test which covers content from grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. There is a lab assessment and a written assessment in June.

**Grade 8 Science - Earth Science**

The 8th grade Regents Earth Science program is based on the New York State Regents Physical Setting: Earth Science Core Curriculum and concludes with the Regents Examination in June (lab and written sections). Successful completion of this course earns students one high school science credit.

Topics include the following areas of study:

- The science of measurement
- Earth’s history
- Dimensions of the Earth (Mapping)
- Meteorology
- Minerals and Rocks
- Water cycle and climate
- Plate tectonics/dynamic crust
- Earth in space
- Surface processes and landscapes
- Environmental awareness

The class objectives focus on a direct understanding of the Earth including hydrosphere, lithosphere, atmosphere, and the solar system. The objectives are achieved through class discussions, current events, independent projects, and required laboratory work. Students will gain an understanding of their place within the natural environment and how to be keepers of that environment through respect, reduction of materials use, recycling, and reuse of precious resources.
Social Studies

Grade 6 Social Studies

The curriculum introduces students to selected people and cultures, primarily of the Eastern Hemisphere. Beginning with the ancient civilizations of the Fertile Crescent, Egypt, China, Greece, and Rome this course studies the growth of civilizations concluding with medieval times. Students learn about important economic, social, cultural, political, and historical development and changes. The effect of geography on the development of culture will also be examined.

Students are directed toward understanding and appreciating different belief systems and the ways of life of other people, they learn to develop strategies for reading, writing, researching, and interpreting information from a variety of texts, documents and other source materials.

In addition, students create and present projects related to their interests and studies. The students are encouraged to keep abreast of current events, particularly those that are occurring in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe, and to make connections between what happened in the past and what is happening today.

Grade 7 Social Studies

The American Nation: Beginnings Through 1877

The course begins with a review of basic geographic concepts pertaining to the Western Hemisphere, with emphasis on the following topics:

- North America
- Central America and the Caribbean
- Physical regions of the United States
- New York State

The curriculum focuses on 6 major themes:

- How diverse people from different areas of the world took over, settled, and adapted to the various regions of the Western Hemisphere. Specific influence is placed on the Iroquois and Algonquin cultures.
- How our democratic ideals were influenced by early English, Dutch, French, and Spanish settlements. Emphasis is then placed on the three sections of the British colonies. Religion and early governmental systems begun in Jamestown are contrasted with the Puritan settlements in Massachusetts Bay.
Why different groups of Europeans migrated to each of the colonies follows along with a look at the social, political, and economic foundations of each colony.
How colonial unhappiness with British rule led to the American Revolution. Focus on how the victorious colonists established our democratic government.
How the United States developed from 1789 to 1850. Major points of interest including Washington's presidency, federalism, the War of 1812, the Era of Good Feelings, the Age of Jackson, and the Antebellum Period are studied.
How the United States remained one nation during the bloody days of the Civil War. The events that led up to war, Lincoln’s presidency, and the war itself are studied in detail. The difficult task of reuniting the nation during the time period known as Reconstruction is also analyzed.

Students in this program develop characteristics and skills that are necessary for academic success. Organizational skills, note taking, reading, document-based questions, thematic essay writing, and interpretation of charts, graphs, and political cartoons are all emphasized. Through a variety of techniques such as cooperative learning, differentiated learning experiences, and authentic assessment, students of varying abilities are asked to maximize their potential. Students acquire Social Studies content and strategies that help them meet the rigorous New York State standards for Social Studies.

Grade 8 Social Studies

The American Nation: 1878 Through Present Day

The course emphasizes how the United States became an economic and global super power after the Civil War. After a review of important themes in American history, the curriculum continues the chronological study of the United States from the middle of the 19th century to the present.

The following major events are studied:

- Westward Movement
- Industrialization
- Immigration
- Urbanization
- Growth of Imperialism
Special emphasis is placed on analyzing those political, social, and economic forces that transformed our agrarian and insular nation of the 19th century into a post-industrial superpower of the 20th century. A variety of strategies are utilized that help students meet and exceed the rigorous New York State standards for Social Studies. Interpretation of cause and effect relationships is especially stressed.

Students are prepared to enter High School with the knowledge and skills required to be successful. Reading the text, note taking, and analyzing primary source documents are important in providing background knowledge necessary to initiate and participate in class discussions. Emphasis is also placed on organizational skills, verbal skills, and interpretation of charts, graphs, and political cartoons.

Student progress is assessed through tests, oral presentations, class work, and homework. One of our major goals is to enhance and develop each student’s writing ability, through the use of Document Based Questions and Thematic Essays.
World Languages

The world language curriculum is directed toward the systematic accomplishment of the goals provided by the New York State Board of Regents, the Modern Language Syllabus of New York State, the guidelines of the American Council for the Teaching of World Languages, the Eastchester Board of Education, and the New Compact for Learning.

In these fundamental documents, one of the strategic objectives is that all students will develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills which will allow them to communicate in at least one language other than English. A second objective is to appreciate and understand other cultures. Classes are conducted in target language, are student-centered, and designed for students of various abilities. Visuals, authentic material, and the use of modern technology are aimed to promote greater enthusiasm in learning the target language and in succeeding.

The World Language Program begins in Grade 7 with French, Italian or Spanish and continues through Grade 12. In addition, Latin is offered in high school as a second or third world language.

The study of a world language provides a unique opportunity to gain access to other people and cultures. Teachers are committed to the principle that all students are capable of learning a second language. Students are entitled to study a world language in order to prepare themselves for an informed and productive role in tomorrow’s global society.

Content

- Greetings, Numbers, Age, Time
- Colors, Human Body, Health and Welfare
- House and Furniture, Family, Community and Neighborhood, Education
- Days of the Week, Months of the Year, Seasons
- Food, Clothing, Shopping
- Sports, Leisure, Travel
- Daily Routines, Directions, Public Services
- Likes and Dislikes
- Cultural Notes
**Structures**

- Nouns
- Articles
- Subject pronouns
- Adjectives
- Demonstrative adjectives/pronouns
- Possessive adjectives/pronouns
- Partitives
- Present tense of regular and irregular verbs
- Reflexive verbs
- Present perfect tense of regular and irregular verbs
- Simple and article prepositions
- Direct/indirect object pronouns

**Skills**

- **Communication**
  - ask and answer questions;
  - give and follow simple instructions;
  - exchange information;
  - compare, contrast, and express opinions and preferences
  - give short oral notes and messages
  - present short skits

- **Cultures**
  - observe, identify, and/or discuss simple patterns of behavior
  - identify, discuss, and produce types of artwork
  - experience products of the culture

- **Connections**
  - discuss topics from other school subject
  - comprehend videos or articles
  - prepare reports on topics of personal interest

- **Comparisons**
  - recognize the category of grammatical forms, cognates and similarities
  - demonstrate awareness of ways to express respect
  - be aware of the existence of idiomatic expressions

- **Communities**
  - present information about language and culture to others
  - perform for peers
Health

Health education instills in students the knowledge and skills to examine alternatives and make responsible health-related decisions. Drawing on knowledge from biological, environmental, psychological, social, physical and medical sciences, health education helps students learn to prevent and manage health problems. It is the combined effort of the home, school and community to prepare our children to meet the challenge of healthy living in an increasingly complex society and often an unsafe environment. Teaching children how to make responsible and informed decisions about their own health and safety is the primary focus of this course.

This program connects to the National Health Education Standards and the New York State Health Education Standards, builds literacy, fosters healthy attitudes and behaviors, involves families in meaningful ways, and prepares students to make wise health decisions by practicing skills essential to the development of healthy behaviors.

Health education is comprehensive, developmentally appropriate and spans all three grade levels in middle school. The health program will focus on the following health topics:

- Nutrition and Physical Activity
- Emotional and Mental Health
- Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention
- Family and Social Health
- Growth and Development
- Personal Health
- Communicable and Non-communicable Diseases
- Consumer and Community Health
- Injury Prevention, Safety and Violence Prevention
- Career Exploration
Digital Citizenship & Literacy

Digital Citizenship and Literacy is a three-year sequence of classes (40 per year) designed to empower students to be safe, responsible and savvy as they navigate their fast-paced, digital world. The core curriculum was developed by Common Sense Media (http://www.commonsensemedia.org) and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The curriculum provides students with research-based information about digital media, helps them explore the complex issues of our connected culture, promotes the development of digital literacy skills and is aligned to the National Standards for ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education), AASL (American Association of School Librarians) and the English Language Arts (ELA) Common Core.

The curriculum is based on the work of Howard Gardner and the GoodPlay Project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Using case studies and real-life scenarios, it emphasizes skill building, critical thinking, ethical discussion and decision making. The curriculum is divided into three major topical strands: "Safety and Security", "Digital Citizenship", and "Research and Information Literacy". Lessons consist of discussion-based activities, media-rich videos, online activities, media creation and performance opportunities.

In these courses, students learn that the Internet is a public space and then develop skills to protect their privacy and respect the privacy of others. They examine the ethics of online relationships – both the negative behaviors to avoid (such as cyberbullying and hate speech) and the positive behaviors that support collaboration and community. They explore their online versus offline identity, noting that how they present themselves online can affect their relationships, sense of self and reputations. While investigating topics ranging from copyright to fair use, students develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as 21st-century learners. Students also develop their research and information-literacy skills as they discover the differences between search engines, directories, and meta-search engines; refine their online searches; apply evaluation strategies to assess the quality of web sites and correctly cite multiple types of online sources.

In addition to the core curriculum outlined above, each course integrates the use of computer and web-based applications to develop word processing, desktop publishing, graphic design, database, spreadsheet, presentation and visual learning skills; all within the context of the Eastchester learning management system, Moodle.
Physical Education

Physical education is an integral part of the total education process at Eastchester Middle School. The physical education program aims to develop physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally fit citizens through the medium of physical activities that have been selected in order to realize this goal. Our philosophy, in brief, is "education through the physical."

With this philosophy in mind, the program strives to incorporate aspects and areas of physical education that will be helpful and appealing to all of our students at the middle school. The physical education staff works constantly to improve and broaden the scope of our activities. We aim to find activities for each student that will enrich his or her personality, while directing students to a more healthful and enjoyable lifestyle.

Physical education classes meet every other day at all grade levels. Each class begins with a warm-up. Instruction includes student participation in demonstrating skills, learning rules, and learning terminology related to physical activity. Instruction leads to practice games and concludes with team play of the sport.

Activities for physical education classes are as follows:

- Track
- Fitness Testing
- Project Adventure
- Football
- Basketball
- Floor Hockey
- Soccer
- Volleyball
- Softball
- Gymnastics
- Dance
- Step Aerobics
- Lacrosse
Special Education

Special education at Eastchester Middle School seeks to provide middle school students with disabilities a continuum of services in order to maintain a full educational opportunity in the Least Restrictive Environment. This continuum of services establishes more options for students with disabilities to have access to the general education program with the appropriate supports and services.

**Resource Room Model**

Resource Room is a 5:1 special education service designed to remediate and enrich the concepts presented to your child in the general education curricular areas. It focuses on your child’s individual academic goals to reinforce students’ understanding of the subject areas, encourage students to advocate for themselves, assist students in completing personal goals for succeeding in school, maintain learning techniques that will allow students to be successful, identify students’ strengths and weaknesses and use that knowledge to better assist them academically.

**Co-Teaching and Collaborative Models**

Using these models, the general education and a special education teacher or teaching assistant work in collaboration to teach students with/without disabilities in a shared classroom. Teachers are responsible for instruction planning and delivery, student achievement, assessment, and classroom management. Students receive a rich curriculum and appropriate academics. The skills and knowledge from these two professionals creates a learning environment for all students.

Collaboration is the foundation for teachers to plan differentiated learning experiences to best meet the needs of all learners. It stresses tiered assignments and products, differentiated learning strategies, accommodations, and flexible grouping to better engage and support students in accessing the curricula.

**Special Class Model**

This program is designed for students to access the general education curriculum via a small structured setting. The small structured setting provides a more personalized learning environment to support students in accessing the curriculum.
Support Seminar Model

When additional support is appropriate to meet the student’s needs, the student can receive the Support Seminar program. Special education teachers, through active collaboration with the academic teachers on their team, provide curriculum support and skill development through multi-sensory lessons incorporating team assignments.

This program helps to prepare students for the New York State Tests. Students with disabilities receive support to access the high quality general education programs and achieve desired learning results. This program also services students without disabilities who are experiencing learning difficulties in general education as a preventive and support service.

Speech and Language

The Speech and Language program is designed to help students further develop their communication skills in areas that have an adverse educational impact on the student’s ability to access the curriculum or their individualized educational program. Several service models are available that include: individual services, small group instruction and/or push in services (The Speech & Language Therapist works with students in the classroom setting). These services are individually tailored to meet the unique needs of each student and maximize success in academics and/or activities of daily living.

Language skill development includes:

- Expressive Language development
- Receptive Language development
- Vocabulary development
- Pragmatics (Social use of Language)
- Syntax development
- Listening comprehension
- Writing skills
- Auditory processing skills

Speech skill development includes:

- Fluency
- Articulation

In addition, the Speech Pathologist works with classroom teachers, support staff and parents so that skills acquired in the Speech and Language therapy are effectively used in the classroom as well as other areas of the student’s life.
**Reading Workshop Grades 6**

The focus of Reading Workshop is to provide support for students who need assistance with meeting New York State Standards with a specific focus on students’ independent reading ability.

Students read high interest fiction and nonfiction materials to help them become more engaged with the texts. Through direct, one on one instruction, as well as small group instruction, students learn to internalize and implement specific reading behaviors when interacting with text. The support allows them to become strategic readers, thereby enhancing their literacy.

**Learning Workshop Grades 6-8**

This course is designed to provide student with assistance and guidance on organization of daily school assignments as well as long term planning of school assignments.
English as a New Language

A student whose first language is not English is identified as an ENL (English as a New Language) when he or she is assessed by the Lab-R (Language Assessment Battery). Once a student is identified as an ENL, he or she is placed in the English as a Second Language program.

The ENL program consists of five levels: Beginner/Entering, Low Intermediate/Emerging, Intermediate/Transitioning, Advanced/Expanding, Proficient/Commanding. The goal of the program is to learn English to communicate and to continue to learn English for academic support until the student can function independently in a mainstream classroom. Students focus on reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

Students are provided with support until they are determined to be proficient by the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) which is given annually in May. In addition to determining exit criteria, the NYSESLAT is used to measure a student’s progress and level from year to year.
Art

**Grade 6**

The 6th grade art course is a foundation course for the study of art on the middle school level. Continued emphasis is placed on the elements of design that were introduced in the elementary school art curriculum:

- Line
- Mass
- Color
- Shape
- Texture
- Pattern

Sixth graders actively participate in an exploratory program covering 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional experiences in fine arts and crafts. Students will be exposed to a variety of media in 6th grade art. Imagination and originality are encouraged.

Through presentations and relevant projects, students will be introduced to art of ancient civilizations through related projects.

**Grade 7**

The 7th grade art course is guided by the curriculum goals set by the New York State Education Department. The curriculum focuses on these topics:

- Space/structure
- Color/light
- Movement

Students will also continue to build a working knowledge of the elements of design: line, shape, color, mass, texture, and pattern. The projects and activities explore concepts through a variety of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional creative problems using fine art and craft media.

As part of the art history continuum for the middle school, 7th graders will be introduced to the art of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Baroque periods through a series of presentations and related activities.

**Grade 8**

Eighth graders continue the study of space/structure, color/light, and movement which began in the 7th grade. Projects and activities focus on these concepts and prepare students for art on the high school level. Students will continue to explore hand-building techniques in a ceramic unit, and will be introduced to acrylic painting methods in a color unit.

As part of the art history continuum for the middle school, students will be introduced to the major art movements of the 19th and 20th centuries with visual presentations and related projects.
Special Opportunities

In addition to classroom activities, our art students are given the chance to take advantage of the numerous extra opportunities the art department makes available.

- Art club
- Participation in the Arts Festival
- Field trips to museums
- Local exhibitions

Global Technology

The Eastchester Middle School Global Technology Program has been designed to help students recognize the global impact of technology on their lives, society and the environment. It encourages students to use technology to solve problems and to identify opportunities to satisfy human needs and wants.

Grade 6 STEM Exploration

Science, Technology, Engineering, Math and Design is an essential area for the continued innovation and prosperity of our country. During this course, students will conduct research, design ideas and build projects related to flight and space, energy and the environment, automation and robotics and green architecture.

Grade 7 Global Technology

Students are introduced to the seven resources of technology: people, information, materials, machines, energy, capital, and time. Students are taught basic problem solving skills. They work individually and in groups to solve several challenges during the course. Students are also taught basic measurement skills and are introduced to basic drafting techniques. Electronics technology and nano-technology are explored. Finally, each student is required to choose and plan a wood-working project.

Grade 8 Global Technology

Eighth Grade Global Technology is a combination of alternative energy systems, mechanical/ electronics technology and digital photography. Students are required to design and construct a functional wind turbine, paying close attention to the production of energy using alternative methods. Students will also investigate and construct a solar powered go-kart. The course will culminate with students participating in an introductory unit in digital photography.
Music

The Music program offers opportunities for all students to develop vocal, instrumental, and appreciation skills and talents. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all students and foster an overall appreciation for the artistic and creative pursuits of man.

Band, chorus, and orchestra are performance ensembles. Attendance at all performances is mandatory and represents 20% of a student's grade. Students are expected to participate in all concerts, assemblies, and performances.

Adventures in Music

This course introduces students to a broad spectrum of music skills and concepts:

- Listening skills
- Singing skills
- Keyboard skills
- Judging musical values
- Music notation

- Current trends in music
- Creating music
- Recorder proficiency
- Facts about music history, styles, form, and instrumentation

Choral Program

The chorus is divided into three separate sections:

- 6th Grade Chorus
- 7th Grade Chorus
- 8th Grade Chorus

Musical study in this program incorporates a wide variety of musical styles through the use of the voice. Performance skills are emphasized as well as the continued development of social skills in a large classroom setting.
**Orchestra**

The orchestra is divided into two separate sections:

- 6th Grade Orchestra
- 7th and 8th Grade Orchestra

Middle school orchestra involves the development of playing skills and music reading skills and the preparation of concert music. The orchestra is scheduled for all students who play a stringed musical instrument. In addition to regularly scheduled rehearsals, students are required to practice at home.

**Band**

Band is divided into three separate sections:

- 6th Grade Band
- 7th Grade Band
- 8th Grade Band

This program encompasses a thorough exploration of age appropriate concert band music including classical, rock, jazz, and pop. In addition to regularly scheduled rehearsals, students are required to practice at home.

**Special Opportunities**

In addition to concerts and assemblies, our music students are encouraged to take advantage of the many extra opportunities the music department makes available:

- Special performances, both in and outside of school, and recitals
- Participation in All County and the annual New York State School Music Association Festival
- Guitar, bass, and piano players are eligible to join the Jazz Band, which is a co-curricular activity