



Michael Bovino  
Principal

***Mattacheese Middle School***

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Elijah Switzer  
Holly Burns  
Assistant Principals

Dear Mattacheese Middle School Families,

As we continue to strive for excellence here at Mattacheese, we are constantly evaluating our programs in an effort to improve the overall student experience at school. One program that we have spent a significant amount of time evaluating is our Advanced Class Program. This notice provides some clarification about how students are being placed into advanced classes in middle school and the improvements we are making to this program.

The value of advanced classes is it is an opportunity for students eager to attempt more challenging instruction, content, and pace of learning than what is taught in a general education course. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves by participating in advanced classes. The district's vision is for students to experience advanced classes based on self-motivated interest and readiness. It is our goal at MMS to ensure that each student is “stretched” intellectually, enabling each to be ready for the rigor of high school courses at DYRHS and beyond.

Starting in the school year 2021-2022, students will have the opportunity to participate in advanced English Language Arts and Mathematics in 7th grade. During their 6th grade year, students will be made aware of this opportunity so that they can strive to be recommended for an advanced section of either or both contents based on their merit and success in 6th grade.

Every spring, a committee consisting of all the 6th grade content teachers, a 7th grade teacher, and administration will meet to determine which students will be placed in advanced classes for 7th grade. Since a major part of the selection process includes student advocacy, we encourage parents to have conversations with their child as to whether or not these classes are right for them. The students will be notified at the end of their 6th grade year if they have been recommended for an advanced section.

Success in advanced classes depends on the students' ability to complete their work, to work well in peer groups, to work well independently, to maintain a positive attitude, and have an overall investment in their coursework. Students in advanced classes are required to meet with their school counselor each trimester to discuss their academic progress.

The committee will review the following items to determine placement for advanced classes, weighted in the order listed below:

1. The main requirement for advanced classes is a student's strong curiosity about the subject matter and the dedication to work well. All students are encouraged to submit a writing sample for the committee to review.
2. Teacher observation and committee recommendation based on the following traits:
  - a. Be self-motivated learners and to manage their time well, without the need for constant reminders. Coming to class prepared is essential because there is a tremendous amount of material to cover.
  - b. Have a willingness to develop a strong working relationship with their teachers, and to ask for help when needed.
  - c. Can complete independent and group work, because students will be expected to gather information from a variety of sources, process it, analyze it, and evaluate it.
  - d. Grading in advanced classes is typically more strenuous, so students and parents need to be able to persevere rather than get discouraged and focus on effort and solutions for student growth and achievement.

The criteria of assessment that is described above is the final determination for invitation to advanced classes. The number of advanced classes for both content areas is determined by the number of students who qualify for placement.

I thank you for your patience and cooperation. If you have questions regarding the program described above, please contact Assistant Principal Mr. Switzer ([switzere@dy-regional.k12.ma.us](mailto:switzere@dy-regional.k12.ma.us)) who is heading up scheduling.

Sincerely,



Michael Bovino

Principal



Elijah Switzer

Assistant Principal



Holly Burns

Assistant Principal



## Course Descriptions

### **Advanced English Language Arts 7**

Advanced English Language Arts Grade 7 provides students with a challenging curriculum that is aligned to the Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks. At the advanced level, students will use a wide variety of texts to increase their use of critical thinking skills. The curriculum moves at an accelerated pace with a more concentrated focus on independent reading, writing, analysis, and problem solving than general education classes. The primary goals of the course are to foster independent learning and encourage in-depth exploration of the content. Completion of Outside and summer/reading writing assignments is required.

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### **Advanced Mathematics 7**

Advanced Mathematics 7 provides students with a challenging curriculum that is aligned to the Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks. At the advanced level, students will engage in rigorous study of operations using rational numbers, linear equations and systems of linear equations, random sampling and data distributions, real-world applications of area and circumference of two-dimensional figures, and surface area of three-dimensional figures. Advanced Mathematics 7 is a compacted course, which means that all of the content of Mathematics 7 and more than half the content of Mathematics 8 is compressed into this single course. Therefore, the curriculum moves at an accelerated pace. Opportunities are provided for students to master mathematical content and skills; develop the ability to make sense of problem situations; and build conceptual understanding that serves as the foundation for higher level mathematics classes at the high school level. The primary goals of the course is to foster independent learning, encourage in-depth exploration of the content, and build the skills necessary for higher level math courses. Daily homework and out-of-class independent work is required.