

2009 - 2010

**Program of
Studies**

Grades 6 - 8

Office Hours: 7:45 – 3:45

Phone: (610) 682-5131

Web Site: www.bhasd.org

Middle School Office 610-682-5131

Dr. Kathy A. Johnson	Principal
Mr. Michael Bourdreau	Assistant Principal
Mrs. Sharon Mutter	MS Secretary
Mrs. Gail Gerlette	Attendance Secretary

Guidance Office

Mr. Larry Schumacher	610-682-5132
Mrs. Heather Kulp	610-682-5115

Web Site www.bhasd.org

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

PHILOSOPHY

Brandywine Heights Middle School has a deep commitment to the education of our students. Our curriculum provides our students with an integrated and comprehensive course of study, along with opportunities for exploratory learning.

SCHOOL NURSE

Your child's health and well being are the primary concern of our school nurse. Parents must complete an emergency card for their children each year to remain on file with the school nurse. This card will come home the first day of school and should be returned by the second day of school. Allergies, medications your child may be taking daily, and/or any special medical conditions of the child should be listed on the card. Throughout the year, please make the nurse aware of any changes in address, phone numbers, or health information.

It is important that students are in the best physical condition while in school. State mandated height, weight, BMI and vision screenings are performed annually. Hearing screenings are also performed in 7th grade. Early in spring of 5th and 6th grade,

parents will be reminded of PA State mandated physical exams for 6th grade and dental exams for 7th grade. If you wish to have your child examined by the school dentist or school physician, you must return the completed consent form to the nurse by the date stated in the letter. The school dentist, physician, and nurse **WILL NOT** do the exam without the completed consent form. If you wish to have your family dentist or physician perform a private exam, the private physical form must be completed and returned to the nurse by the date stated in the letter. Any exams one year prior to the entry of the required year will be accepted.

All immunization requirements must be met prior to the first day of school to avoid exclusion of your child from school. Your child may be admitted provisionally if proof of at least one dose of the required immunization has been administered. A copy of an official immunization record or note from your child's physician must be provided. A plan for completion of the remaining immunizations must be submitted to the school nurse. All children Kindergarten through 12th grade must have at least 4 properly spaced doses of Diphtheria-Tetanus (1st shot on or after child's fourth birthday), 3 properly spaced doses of polio, 2 properly spaced measles or MMR (1st dose administered at 12 months of age or older), 3 properly spaced Hepatitis B immunizations, and Varicella Immunity (proof of disease or 2 vaccines administered at 12 months of age or older). All students entering 7th grade also need a Tdap and Meningococcal vaccine. If your child has not received immunizations due to religious or medical reasons, please discuss reasons with the school nurse and she will inform you of the required signatures needed on your child's immunization certificate on file at school.

Whenever a child is still ill after one rest period in the nurses office, he or she will either be returned to class, released to you, or the emergency contact person may be called to come pick him/her up. The parent, or designated contact person, should report to the nurse's suite to personally pick the child up from school. Because of liability, NO STUDENT will be allowed to walk home when the nurse determines they are too ill or injured to remain in school. Someone must pick them up and be able to care for them. It is very important, when possible to choose an emergency contact person, or neighbor or relative, who lives close by and does not work.

When your child is not feeling well, please take the time to assess whether your child should come to school or stay at home. Please do not send them to school ill. This may jeopardize the health of other students. If you decide to send your child to school, there are PA State Guidelines the nurse follows, and based on the nurse's assessment she will determine if the child may remain or is too ill to stay in school.

Our medication policy remains the same. A medication form will be sent home on the first day of school. Additional forms are also available on the BHASD website. Keep this form in a safe place in case your child needs either over-the-counter or prescription medication during school hours. As school nurses, we will not be able to give your son/daughter any medication (including over-the-counter), without this form completed and signed by the parent and prescribing physician. All medication must be in the original container identifying the child, the medication, the dosage, and the prescribing physician. We would like to encourage the parents to directly deliver any medication to the school nurse. Please do not send medication with your child on the bus.

Healthy children are better learners. Please make sure you encourage your child to eat breakfast and make healthy choices.

COURSE OF STUDY

Core Subjects

These classes run throughout the school year and comprise the core of academic study for all students.

Science
Math
English

Social Studies
Reading
Latin (8th grade only)

Encore Subjects

In addition to core subjects, students will have instruction in the focus areas listed below throughout the year, but they do not meet everyday. These courses offer study in a variety of areas that support the healthy academic development of young adolescents.

Sixth Grade

Physical Education
Health
Art

Seventh Grade

Physical Education
Health
Art

Eighth Grade

Physical Education
Health
Family & Consumer Science

Music
Library
Computers
Learning Strategies

Music
Computers
Learning Strategies

Computers

Elective Classes

Please read the description for each elective class carefully. Not every elective class is available to all grades. A grade for these electives will be included on the report card of each student who participates.

Art

This class is for 8th grade students only. Students will be able to apply more complex technical skills as they manipulate the elements of art and the principles of design, art media, and ideas. Art projects, classroom discussions, and critiques will increase the students' confidence in skills learned during seventh grade, as well as introduce new skills to promote a higher level of interest and learning. Students will also be able to make conscious choices of media and techniques for expressive purposes. Using a hands-on approach, students will create and produce works which model traditional and modern artistic techniques, while reflecting on each student's unique style.

Students will become more aware of beauty in the environment by understanding the importance of art and design in everyday life. They will learn how and why artists of the past and present have created art. Students will compare and contrast art from different cultures and be able to formulate reasoned responses to meaningful art questions. In addition students will explore some careers in community art resources. A combination of artistic design, art history and analysis, this graded semester course provides art-interested students with an additional means of expression beyond the general middle school art curriculum.

Band

BHMS has two bands to honor the developmental differences of young adolescents. One band for fifth and sixth grade students and a second band for seventh and eighth grade students. Instrumental music includes two concerts and various other performances throughout the year. Students will receive one in-school lesson per 6-day cycle and will receive a grade for each marking period based on lesson and performance attendance, performance, attitude, responsibility and musical progress. Participation in all concerts and performance events are required of all students electing to take band and/or chorus.

Chorus

Chorus is designed for students who enjoy singing and desire to improve their music and singing skills. Similar to band, two chorus groups are offered, one for fifth and sixth grade students and one for seventh and eighth grade students. Each chorus will perform two concerts and various other performances throughout the year. Emphasis is placed on the following: 1) two and three-part harmonization, 2) sight-reading, 3) improving vocal skills and techniques, and 4) experiencing various styles of choral music. All middle school students are eligible to participate. Chorus is an elective class that is held all year. Students will receive a grade for each marking period. Part of the grade is based on participation at both the winter and spring concerts. Participation in all concerts and performance events are required of all students electing to take band and/or chorus.

Boys Chorus

Boys Chorus is designed for boys in **grades five and six** who enjoy singing and desire to improve their music and singing skills. Boys Chorus will perform two concerts and various other performances throughout the year. Emphasis is placed on the following: 1) unison and two-part harmonization 2) sight-reading 3) improving vocal skills and techniques 4) experiencing various styles of choral music and 5) addressing voice issues specific to the developing male voice. Boys Chorus is an elective class that is held all year and is open to all boys in grades five and six. Students will receive a grade for each marking period. Part of the grade is based on participation at both the winter and spring concerts. Attendance at all concerts and performance events are required of all students electing to take Boys Chorus.

Creative Writing for Enjoyment and Publication

In this course, students will practice the craft of creative writing. Students will have the opportunity to create short stories, poems, plays and, if interested, longer stories. Students will review the basic elements of creating engaging pieces and will rely on each other for feedback for their writing. Students will also research the teen publishing market and will work toward creating a piece for possible publication. This course is for students who enjoy and are serious about writing.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

CORE SUBJECTS

SCIENCE

- Grade 6: Students receive instruction in many areas of science, making this a general science curriculum. Hands-on activities are designed to provide familiarity and competency in investigative scientific procedures and lab materials as well as the higher order thinking skills needed for analytical problem solving. Chemistry, technology, physics, astronomy, nutrition and an environmental unit provide the core for these investigations.
- Grade 7: Students study the life sciences with an emphasis on the development of biological concepts and how they relate to one another in the world around them. Topics of study include cell structure and function, genetics and DNA, bacteria and viruses, fungi, protists, botany, zoology, classification and ecology. Laboratory work and large projects are used regularly to provide a hands-on experience of material and reinforce class content.
- Grade 8: The course covers four broad areas of study: Geology; Meteorology; Astronomy; and Oceanography. Geology includes the study of rocks and minerals, soils, erosion, and weathering. Meteorology is the study of our atmosphere and its effect on man. Weather forecasting and causes of weather are an important part of this study. Astronomy is the study of the earth and its relation to the universe, which includes the moon, solar system, sun, stars, galaxies, and space travel. Oceanography is the study of the oceans and their basins, which include waves, shorelines, currents, ocean water, the sea floor and its sediments, and the living things in the ocean.

MATHEMATICS

- Grade 6: Students continue their study and mastery of the four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division), graphing, decimals, fractions and problem solving. Some time will be spent on ratio and proportion, probability and statistics, percents, integers, geometry and calculator use. Beginning algebra concepts are taught throughout the year to solve simple equations.
- Grade 7: Students will continue their study and mastery of computational skills with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. Integers, basic equations, and percents will be introduced. Emphasis will be placed on critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as clear communication of mathematical ideas.

PRE-ALGEBRA

Grade 7 & 8: This course will provide students with the information and tools necessary to be active in their learning of the basics of algebra in order to prepare them for an Algebra I course. Students will learn elementary algebraic skills, problem solving and geometry concepts. Students will strive to develop an importance for algebra by studying its relation to real world applications.

ALGEBRA

Grade 7 & 8: This course will provide students with the information and tools necessary to be active in their learning of algebra and related topics. Students will develop an understanding of algebra through applying previous knowledge of arithmetic and other mathematical concepts to real world applications.

GEOMETRY

Grade 8: This class is a standard high school level geometry course. It is designed for students who have previously been introduced to the basic skills of algebra and arithmetic. Several of these necessary algebra and arithmetic skills will be used throughout this course. Students will work with several different types of geometric concepts such as inductive and deductive reasoning, formal presentations of proofs, coordinate and transformational geometry, measurements, and the investigating of geometric figures. This course is designed to be very hands-on and student-oriented. Students will be encouraged to make connections between math concepts and real world applications to help them realize the importance of mathematics throughout their lives.

ENGLISH

Grade 6: The sixth grade English curriculum will include spelling, writing, grammar, speaking, and listening. Students will write in a variety of modes including persuasive, informational and narrative. They will be assessed based on the PSSA writing domains, rubrics and other forms of assessment.

Grade 7: Students work to improve their writing skills by composing a variety of written pieces. Also, students continue their study and mastery of grammar, mechanics and word usage. Various pieces of literature are studied and

analyzed as well. Each thematic unit of study is finalized by a formal written piece, a comprehensive test, and/or a creative project.

- Grade 8: Strong emphasis is placed on the continued development of the student's writing skills. Students explore narrative, expository, persuasive and descriptive writing. Grammatical construction and literature exploration play an important role in this development. Speaking and listening strategies will continue to develop throughout the year.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Grade 6: Students learn about Ancient Civilizations starting with the Fertile Crescent. Other ancient civilizations are explored including Mesopotamia, Egypt, Nubia, China, India, Greece and Rome through Medieval times. Information presented ties ancient civilizations to the conditions in the modern day and the focus is on history, geography, multiculturalism, world religions, humanities, citizenship, debatable issues and current events.

- Grade 7: The seventh grade social studies curriculum focuses on map skills, physical and human geography. The goal is for students to realize how and why different places of the world affect, depend on, and relate to one another both historically and throughout the world today. Students will analyze the physical, human and cultural geography of North America, Latin America, Africa, Southwest Asia, Australia, Oceania and Antarctica using the Five Themes of Geography and the Eight Elements of Culture. Skills including reading maps, interpreting graphs, charts and diagrams, absolute and relative location and measuring distance using a scale bar will also be taught.

- Grade 8: The eighth grade social studies curriculum includes the tracing of United States history from colonial times until the end of the Civil War. The contributions of Pennsylvania to this time period are also studied. Elements of economics and geography are a part of the course of study. In addition, the course expands upon the historical development and current expression of United States civics.

READING

- Grade 6: Students will read a variety of genres throughout the course of the year. Emphasis is placed on building vocabulary, comprehension strategies and critical reading/thinking skills in fiction and non-fiction writing. Some of the

reading material will be assigned, while students will also have opportunity to select books they are interested in.

Title I Reading The Brandywine Heights Area School District participates in the No Child Left Behind Federal Programs Title I initiative. In order for students to receive this additional support, they must qualify through teacher recommendation and district screening assessments. After students are identified, our Reading Specialist will use individual and small group instruction in both regular classes and as a pull-out program for instruction.

Grade 7: The seventh grade reading program is designed to improve reading, learning and thinking skills. The program integrates literature, writing, speaking and listening. Emphasis is placed on building vocabulary, comprehension strategies, critical reading/thinking and reading interests while exploring literature from various genres. While exploring different genres in reading, students will have opportunity to select books they are interested in and will be motivated to read more to become lifelong readers.

Grade 8: Emphasis is placed on reading strategies to develop skills and motivation to create life-long readers. A wide variety of reading material is used throughout the year with quality literature being the basis. Having students access prior knowledge, predict outcomes, set reading purposes, think while reading, and react to what is read while modeling these same strategies forms the basis of the reading instruction in eighth grade. Setting time aside for independent reading gives the students a chance to pursue their own reading interests and promotes reading for a lifetime.

LATIN

Grade 8: The Latin class introduces eighth graders to the basics of Latin vocabulary and sentences, to enhance each student's linguistic intelligence. Students will explore the connections between Roman and American cultures while learning the language that has been influential to Western civilization in so many ways. The primary goal of the course is to build vocabulary and linguistic ability in English, and to provide students with a framework to acquire German, Spanish, or French in the high school.

GIFTED SUPPORT

The gifted program is designed to extend the regular curriculum. Critical reading and thinking skills are enhanced through novel reading and vocabulary work. Writing skills are strengthened as students react to current readings. Students participate in six to eight week units that extend the various curricular areas of science, social studies, and

language arts. Throughout these units emphasis is on problem solving, and critical and creative thinking. Research and computer skills are also developed during the units. Units vary according to the interests and needs of the class.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

A variety of special education programs are conducted in the middle school in accordance with state regulations for eligible students. These programs include, but are not limited to, learning support, speech and language support, vision support and hearing support. The program for each special education student is designed to meet their specific needs. The students' individual educational program (IEP) articulates the specific program for each special education student.

ENCORE SUBJECTS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Grade 6-8: Through participation in activities such as field hockey, soccer, basketball, volleyball, tennis, flag football, speedball, softball, lacrosse and various indoor and outdoor games, students have the opportunity to develop skills in ball control and body control. Previously learned skills form the foundation upon which more highly developed skills are built. Personal fitness concepts and techniques are also discussed and practiced for the sake of both present and future well-being. Safety is stressed in all activities.

HEALTH

Grade 6-8: Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and decision-making skills that will help them to make informed choices about their present and future well being. Topics of study include growth and development, nutrition, drug and alcohol prevention, communicable diseases, and first aid.

ART

Grade 6: Students will be introduced to the seven elements of art. They will study, experience and create projects which utilize line, form, shape, color, value, texture, and space. Each art project will illustrate the student's understanding of these art elements.

In this course, students will also begin to recognize famous artists and their paintings. They will develop skills of observation and begin to critically examine art so they can make informed decisions about art in their visual world. Students will develop an appreciation for individual styles, artistic differences and creative uniqueness. A variety of two and three-dimensional art mediums will be explored.

Grade 7: Students will be encouraged to see, think, feel, enjoy, and grow in awareness and creativity. They will develop inquiry skills and vocabulary as they explore the meanings of art works through subject matters, themes, and symbols. Emphasis will be placed upon the development of confidence in the ability to create original two and three-dimensional art projects. The elements and principles of design will be stressed and reinforced with a special emphasis on color theory.

As students develop skills in creating, they will not only understand and appreciate art, but they will also develop the competence in handling the materials and tools in each project. They will also learn that artists create their work by searching for ideas to express, developing design skills, and using materials expressively.

COMPUTERS

Grade 6: This course is an overview of the computer and various software programs. Students continue practicing their keyboarding skills from 5th grade using MicroType. They will progress through this program at their own pace, while completing various projects for class. They will learn more about Microsoft Word, the Internet and Internet safety. They will also explore Microsoft Excel, Publisher and Power Point.

Grade 7: In 7th grade, students continue to practice and master keyboarding techniques using MicroType. Students will learn more features of Internet Explorer, Microsoft Excel, Publisher, Photo Draw and Power Point, and use each to complete various class projects. They will also learn how to use a digital camera and create a story with the pictures using Microsoft Photostory.

Grade 8: In 8th grade, students will learn how to use a video camera and explore video editing techniques. They will work in groups to complete a series of video projects using Microsoft Movie Maker and Windows Media Player. They will also explore graphic manipulation techniques using school software.

MUSIC APPRECIATION

- Grade 6: Sixth Grade Music Appreciation establishes an environment where each student is taught the concepts and fundamentals that provide the knowledge and skills to appreciate the art of music and improve musical literacy.
- Grade 7: Instrumental music creates the focus of work in the seventh grade music curriculum. The playing of guitars is used to explore rhythm, melodies, singing, and performance skills. Each student learns basic chords and strumming techniques on the acoustic guitar.

LIBRARY SKILLS

- Grade 6-7: Library skills is designed to familiarize and acquaint students with the school media center's facility, technologies and procedures. In meeting course objectives, students will review previously learned library skills and refine research skills. Students will have a good foundation in becoming critical analyzers, creative information users, efficient information problem solvers, and life long information seekers/readers.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

- Grade 8: FCS covers two subject areas - Child Development and Foods addressing state standards set in the areas of nutrition and child development. The Child Development program examines the skills and understanding students need to become good caregivers. Lessons on child care skills, safety, play and literature, child developmental milestones and positive guidance are included. The Foods section introduces students to kitchen safety and sanitation. Lessons included cover kitchen tools, large and small appliances, etiquette, table-setting, food pyramid guidelines for meal planning and cooking labs. Grades are based on class work, participation, projects, labs, tests and quizzes.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

- Grade 6-7: Students in the middle school will have three class periods per six-day cycle devoted to learning strategies. These strategies will help students better understand their own learning processes and support both their current and future acquisition of knowledge. Strategies taught are intended to improve student fluency, comprehension, thinking, problem solving, and enjoyment of reading and writing within content area.

