

Updated 6-29-16

White Plains Middle School Advanced Courses Handbook

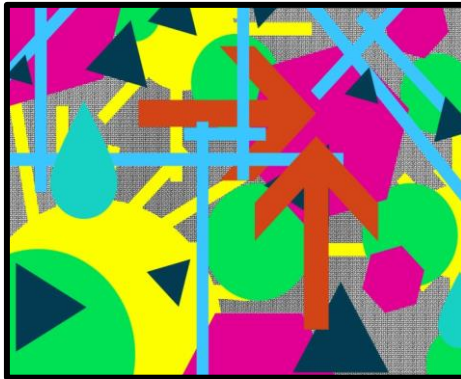


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Overview

White Plains Middle School offers a variety of enrichment and acceleration opportunities at the middle school level to ensure that our strongest students are fully engaged and challenged with our curriculum, and all students have opportunities to think critically, develop strong communication skills, and effectively solve problems. Our enrichment and acceleration opportunities at the middle school level include the following:

- ❖ Visual Reasoning Enrichment in grade 6
- ❖ Advanced Math in grades 6 & 7
- ❖ Algebra in grades 7 & 8
- ❖ Geometry in grade 8
- ❖ Advanced English Language Arts (ELA) in grades 6-8
- ❖ ELA Enrichment in grades 6-8
- ❖ Earth Science in grade 8



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Visual Reasoning Enrichment

The visual reasoning enrichment (VRE) program in grade 6 builds visual communication skills and critical thinking through project-based learning. Aligned with the New York State Common Core Learning Standards in English, Technology, and Art, this program focuses on multi-media projects, story-telling through graphics, architecture, and global awareness.

Criteria for Selection:

- ❖ The non-verbal portion of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) will be administered each February to all fifth grade students in the District not currently enrolled in VRE. Students scoring in the top 15% will be added to the current VRE students for participation in the grade 6 VRE program. In total, 30% of 6th grade students will be enrolled in the program.
- ❖ New entrants arriving to the district after the CogAT has been administered will be given the test to assess if they qualify for the VRE program.

Schedule:

- ❖ Students participating in VRE will take the course on alternating days for the entire year.

VRE Curriculum At-a-Glance:

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the elements of visual design and composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhancing communication skills through digital photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital Storytelling: Telling stories through graphics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to 3D modeling and 3D printing: Designing your dream space

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Advanced Math

Our Advanced Mathematics courses in grades 6-7 are challenging and fast paced programs. The 6th grade course includes the entire grade 6 Common Core curriculum and additional grade 7 topics. The 7th grade course includes the entire grade 7 Common Core curriculum and additional grade 8 topics. The intention of these courses is to provide the foundational concepts necessary to prepare students to take High School Algebra in grade 8.

Criteria for Selection:

- ❖ The District uses a weighted system to rank order all students based on 2/3 test scores plus 1/3 math report card grades that allows for two points of entry as program placements are prepared for the following year:
 - 1) In February: The district uses a combination of the NYS Math Assessment score from the prior year and the Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI) score from January of the current year plus math report card grades from Quarter One and Quarter Two of the current year;
 - 2) In August: The district uses a combination of the NYS Math Assessment score from the current year and the SMI score from June of the current year plus final math report card grades from the current year.

Students who rank in the top 30% during either point of entry outlined above are enrolled in the advanced course for the following year.

Note: If students do not have NYS math test scores, the SMI will be weighted 2/3.

- ❖ New entrants will be assessed with the SMI. Math report card grades from the student's prior school will also be considered. New entrants who rank in the top 30% will be enrolled in the advanced course.

Criteria for Continuation:

- ❖ Students must earn a final course average of 75 or above to remain enrolled in advanced courses. If a student receives a report card grade of 75 or below for any quarter, a meeting will be scheduled for the student, teacher, parent/guardian, guidance counselor, and principal to develop and implement a plan of additional support.

Schedule:

- ❖ The Advanced Math classes meet daily throughout the year.

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Advanced Math 6-7 Curriculum At-a Glance:

Grade 6	Grade 7
<p>Quarter 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operations with whole numbers, fractions and decimals and concepts of common factors and multiples• Read, write, evaluate and find equivalent expressions <p>Quarter 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solve problems involving area of polygons• Understand ratio and rate concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems• Solve percent problems• Ordering and operations with integers <p>Quarter 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operations with rational numbers (positive and negative fractions and decimals)• Write equations in 1 and 2 variables• Solve 1 and 2-step equations and inequalities• Solve problems involving surface area and volume <p>Quarter 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop understanding of statistical variability and summarize and describe statistical distributions• Identify proportional relationships in graphs, tables, equations, and real-world problems• Write and solve proportions	<p>Quarter 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operations with rational numbers (positive and negative fractions and decimals)• Simplify algebraic expressions• Solve multi-step equations and solve and graph inequalities <p>Quarter 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compute unit rates• Recognize and represent proportional relationships in tables, graphs, equations, diagrams and verbal descriptions; identify constant of proportionality• Solve percent problems• Solve problems involving scale• Properties of triangles and angle relationships <p>Quarter 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solve problems involving circumference and area of circles, surface area and volume of prisms, pyramids, cones, cylinders, spheres• Use random sampling in statistical analysis, and use statistical measures to draw comparative inferences• Investigate chance processes and develop, use and evaluate probability models• Graph linear equations <p>Quarter 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to functions• Rational vs. irrational numbers• Pythagorean theorem• Laws of exponents

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Algebra

The opportunity to accelerate into a high school-level Algebra course is available to students in grades 7 and 8. This course culminates with the Common Core Algebra High School Regents exam.

Criteria for Selection:

Grade 7 (Double Acceleration)

- ❖ The District uses a weighted system of 2/3 test scores (a combination of the NYS Math Assessment from the prior year and the SMI from January of the current year) plus 1/3 math report card grades from Quarter One and Two of the current year to rank order all students in Advanced Math 6. If students do not have NYS math test scores, the SMI will be weighted 2/3. The top 25 students are enrolled in Algebra 7.

Grade 8 (Regular Acceleration)

- ❖ Students who earn a final course average of 75 or above in Advanced Math 7 will be enrolled in Algebra 8.
- ❖ Students in regular Math 7 who rank in the top 30% based on the weighted system of 2/3 test scores (a combination of the NYS Math Assessment from the prior year and the SMI from January of the current year) and 1/3 math report card grades from Quarter One and Two of the current year may be enrolled in Algebra 8. Qualifying students will be notified by May 1 and invited to attend a Summer Algebra Readiness program to facilitate the transition from regular Math 7 and prepare them for success in Algebra 8.

Criteria for Continuation:

Grade 7

- ❖ Students must earn a final course average of 75 or above and score a 75 or above on the Algebra Common Core Regents in order to be enrolled in Geometry 8.

Grade 8

- ❖ Students must earn a final course average of 85 or above to be enrolled in Honors Geometry in grade 9.

Schedule:

- ❖ Algebra classes meet daily throughout the year. Students in double accelerated Algebra 7 must also take a second period of math daily. Since they will be completing 3 years of content in one year, the second period of math instruction provides additional time to master not only the Common Core Algebra Standards, but also the foundational Grade 7 and Grade 8 Common Core Standards.

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Algebra Curriculum At-a-Glance:

Algebra 7	Algebra 8
<p>Quarter 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize and represent proportional relationships in graphs, tables, equations, diagrams, and verbal descriptions. Use proportional reasoning to solve percent problems• Graph linear equations and understand the meaning of slope• Solve problems involving statistical analysis and investigate chance processes by using probability models <p>Quarter 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume• Solve linear equations and inequalities• Solve systems of linear inequalities• Explore linear functions <p>Quarter 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laws of exponents, scientific notation, exponential functions• Angle relationships• Polynomial equations and factoring• Graphing and solving quadratic functions <p>Quarter 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rational vs. irrational, Pythagorean Theorem, radical functions and equations• Rational equations and functions• Data analysis and displays• Regents Review	<p>Quarter 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solve multi-step linear equations• Solve multi-step inequalities and graph solutions• Graph linear functions <p>Quarter 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write linear functions• Solve systems of equations and inequalities• Exponential functions and sequences <p>Quarter 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operations with and factoring polynomial expressions• Graph quadratic functions <p>Quarter 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solve quadratic equations• Radical functions and equations• Data analysis• Regents Review

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Geometry

The opportunity to double accelerate into a high school-level Geometry course is available to math students in grade 8. This course culminates with the Common Core Geometry High School Regents exam.

Criteria for Selection:

- ❖ Students must earn a final course average of 75 or above in Algebra 7 and score a 75 or above on the Algebra Common Core Regents in order to be enrolled in Geometry 8.

Criteria for Continuation:

- ❖ Students must earn a final course average of 85 or above in Geometry 8 to be enrolled in Honors Alg 2/Trig in grade 9.

Schedule:

- ❖ The Geometry 8 class meets daily throughout the year.

Geometry 8 Curriculum At-a-Glance:

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proof, parallel and perpendicular lines• Transformations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Triangles• Quadrilaterals• Similarity and Trigonometry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circles, coordinates, and constructions• Circles and angles• Circles and segments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Surface/Lateral areas of solids• Volume of solids• Probability• Regents Review

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Advanced English Language Arts

Our Advanced English Language Arts (ELA) courses in grades 6-8 utilize the College Board Springboard instructional program as a primary resource, which is fully aligned to the Common Core Standards. Students have the opportunity to read complex short texts, novels, and are introduced to Shakespearean plays. Advanced students explore unit topics in greater depth, complete more assignments independently, and are held to rigorous standards of performance in their written work, including narrative, expository, and opinion pieces. Students are expected to complete at least two major writing pieces per quarter.

Criteria for Selection:

- ❖ The District uses a weighted system to rank order all students based on 2/3 test scores plus 1/3 math report card grades that allows for two points of entry as program placements are prepared for the following year:
 - 1) In February: The district uses a combination of the NYS ELA Assessment score from the prior year and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) score from January of the current year plus ELA report card grades from Quarter One and Quarter Two of the current year;
 - 2) In August: The district uses a combination of the NYS ELA Assessment score from the current year and the SRI score from June of the current year plus final ELA report card grades from the current year.

Students who rank in the top 30% during either point of entry outlined above are enrolled in the advanced course for the following year.

Note: If students do not have NYS ELA test scores, the SRI will be weighted 2/3.

- ❖ New entrants will be assessed with the SRI. ELA report card grades from the student's prior school will also be considered. New entrants who rank in the top 30% will be enrolled in the advanced course.

Criteria for Continuation:

- ❖ Students must earn a final course average of 75 or above to remain enrolled in advanced courses. If a student receives a report card grade of 75 or below for any quarter, a meeting will be scheduled for the student, teacher, parent/guardian, guidance counselor, and principal to develop and implement a plan of additional support.

Schedule:

- ❖ The Advanced ELA classes meet daily throughout the year.

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Advanced ELA Curriculum At-a-Glance:

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>Quarter 1: "Stories of Change." Reading and writing personal narratives.</p> <p>Quarter 2: "The Power to Change." Reading novels and writing literary responses and expository essays.</p> <p>Quarter 3: "Changing Perspectives." Analyzing informational texts and writing argumentative letters with fully supported opinions.</p> <p>Quarter 4: "The Final Act." Reading and performing Shakespeare and poetry.</p>	<p>Quarter 1: "The Choices We Make." Reading and writing narratives and studying the elements of story.</p> <p>Quarter 2: "What Influences My Choices?" Reading and writing expository and argumentative texts and analyzing the elements of advertising and persuasion.</p> <p>Quarter 3: "How We Choose to Act." Reading and writing analytical texts.</p> <p>Quarter 4: "Shakespeare." Reading, interpreting, planning, and performing.</p>	<p>Quarter 1: "The Challenge of Heroism." Reading expository texts and exploring the hero's journey.</p> <p>Quarter 2: "The Challenge of Utopia." Conducting research and writing argumentative pieces.</p> <p>Quarter 3: "The Challenge to Make a Difference." Reading thematic essays and writing from multiple sources.</p> <p>Quarter 4: "Shakespeare." Overcoming challenges through comedy.</p>

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English Language Arts Enrichment

The English Language Arts (ELA) enrichment classes, called *Critical Literacy II*, are provided in addition to core ELA classes in grades 6-8. Using complex, multicultural texts from the Junior Great Books program and a variety of other inter-disciplinary sources, the *Critical Literacy II* classes promote close reading and critical thinking through shared inquiry discussions, written reflections, literary essays, and project-based learning. Common core ELA/literacy standards are embedded throughout the courses.

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Criteria for Selection:

- ❖ All students who do not require academic support services will be enrolled in *Critical Literacy II* classes in grades 6-8.
- ❖ New entrants will be assessed with the SRI. ELA report card grades from the student's prior school will also be considered. Students who do not require academic support services will be enrolled in the *Critical Literacy II* course.

Criteria for Continuation:

- ❖ Students who do not require academic support services will remain enrolled in in *Critical Literacy II* courses.

Schedule:

- ❖ The *Critical Literacy II* classes meet daily throughout the year.

Critical Literacy II Curriculum At-a-Glance:

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Quarter 1: Science Fiction	Quarter 1: Questioning	Quarter 1: The Power of Inquiry
Quarter 2: Close Reading Strategies with Fiction and Nonfiction	Quarter 2: Investigating the Impact that External Forces and History Can Have on Decisions and Lives	Quarter 2: Taking a Stand
Quarter 3: Mythology and Ancient Civilizations	Quarter 3: Social Commentary	Quarter 3: Food: Health, Poverty, & Sustainability
Quarter 4: Media: Persuasive Texts	Quarter 4: Investigating Experiences beyond Our Own	Quarter 4: Changes

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Earth Science

The opportunity to accelerate into a high school-level Earth Science course is available to students in grade 8. This course culminates in the Earth Science High School Regents exam.

Criteria for Selection:

- ❖ The District uses a weighted system to rank order all students based on 2/3 for test scores from the Science 7 final assessment plus 1/3 for final report card grades in Science 7. The top 50% are enrolled in Earth Science.
- ❖ New entrants in grade 8 will be assessed with the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and the Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI). Science report card grades from the student's prior school will also be considered. New entrants who rank in the top 50% will be enrolled in Earth Science.

Criteria for Continuation:

- ❖ Students must maintain a course average of 70 or above to remain enrolled in Earth Science 8. If a student receives a report card grade of 75 or below for any quarter, a meeting will be scheduled for the student, parent/guardian, guidance counselor, and principal to develop and implement a plan of additional support.
- ❖ Students must earn a final course average of 90 or above in order to be enrolled in Honors Living Environment in grade 9.

Schedule:

- ❖ The Earth Science classes meet daily throughout the year. A lab period is attached every-other day for an extended block of instruction.

Earth Science Curriculum At-a Glance:

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prologue• Mapping the Earth's Surface• Earth in Space: Celestial Motions, Astronomy and Deep Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy in Earth's Processes• Insolation: Energy in Earth's Atmosphere• Weather and Atmospheric Processes• Water Cycle and Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weathering, Erosion and Deposition• Minerals, Rocks and Resources• Earth's Dynamic Crust	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Landscapes and Geomorphology• Earth's History and Geologic Time

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Appeals Process

The following procedures shall apply when a parent/guardian/staff member requests that a selection decision be reconsidered.

Reasons for Appeals:

- A circumstance believed to have caused a misinterpretation of the results exists; or
- There is an extenuating circumstance (e.g., extended illness, personal tragedy) believed to have impacted student performance.

Steps for Appeals:

- 1) Parent/guardian/staff member submits a written request to the principal outlining the reason for the appeal. The deadline for submitting these requests is June 30th for Highlands (initial course requests are mailed home in early June) and September 15th for Eastview (schedules are mailed home the end of August). Within two weeks of receiving the written request, the principal and the curriculum coordinator will schedule a meeting to discuss the reason for the appeal and to review the data with the parent/guardian/staff member. The principal and coordinator will notify the parent in writing of the decision (cc to Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction and Superintendent).
- 2) If the parent/guardian/staff member wishes to take the appeal to the next level, a written request must be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools within two weeks of receiving the written decision from the principal/curriculum coordinator. The Superintendent or his/her designee will schedule a meeting to discuss the reason for the appeal with the parent/guardian/ staff member within two weeks of receiving the written request for the second-level of appeal. The Superintendent or designee will issue a final decision regarding the appeal and will notify the parent in writing (cc to Principal, Coordinator and Assistant Superintendent).