

# *River Dell Middle School*



## *Program of Studies*

*2021 - 2022*

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

*Richard Freedman*

Welcome to River Dell Middle School. We are excited to be part of your child’s educational journey as they enter the middle level of their school careers.

River Dell strives to provide every learner with a combination of rigor and compassion that produces a learning climate conducive to individual student success. We want our learners to realize their full academic potential while continuing to grow and mature as young adults. We are committed to maximizing the potential of each student and to encourage all of our learners to participate in their individual school experience, broadening the horizon beyond what was possible in elementary school. You are invited and encouraged to preview our school by visiting the RDMS website at [www.riverdell.org/rdms](http://www.riverdell.org/rdms).

There is something for everyone to participate in and to enjoy here at River Dell Middle School, including extracurricular clubs, sports, intramurals, so reach out and explore all that is available to you!

River Dell has a wonderful year planned, filled with exciting events and happenings and are awaiting for you to begin exploring all of it with us. Please use this resource to help you discover more about your school and how it can help you to continue your successful journey into educational adulthood.



*River Dell Golden Hawks*

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## **HEALTH FORMS**

All incoming 7th graders are **REQUIRED** to submit a physical according to River Dell Board of Education Policy 5141.3 and the New Jersey Statutes and Administrative Code.

### **7TH GRADE STUDENTS:**

- **A physical is REQUIRED for all incoming 7th grade students**, whether or not they will be participating in a sport. *Physicals dated between 9/1/2020 and 9/1/2021 will be accepted.*
- If a student is **NOT** participating in a sport, the physical must be received in the office of the RDMS Nurse prior to September 1st. Please mail the completed forms to:

**River Dell Middle School  
Attn: Mrs. Francesca Puleo  
Nursing Office  
230 Woodland Avenue  
River Edge, NJ 07661**

- If the 7th grade student **will be** participating in a middle school sport, please follow the directions noted below, mailing the forms as directed to Mr. Denis Nelson.

### **8TH GRADE STUDENTS:**

- A physical is **REQUIRED** to participate in an interscholastic sport and/or intramurals in 8th grade, otherwise a physical is NOT required.

**NOTE:** Please have your physician complete the necessary forms, which are located on the district home page: [www.riverdell.org](http://www.riverdell.org). Click: **OUR DISTRICT**, then **STUDENT REGISTRATION INFORMATION**, then **REQUIRED HEALTH OFFICE FORMS AND INFORMATION**. Download required 7th grade physicals and other health forms, if applicable.

## **ATHLETIC FORMS**

If your child will be participating in a middle school sport, their **physical must be received in the Athletic Office prior to September 1st** in order to be cleared for fall sports. Please mail the completed forms to:

**River Dell High School  
Attn: Mr. Denis Nelson  
Athletic Department  
55 Pyle Street  
Oradell, NJ 07649**

Once the physical is reviewed in the high school, it will be sent to Mrs. Puleo, the RDMS Nurse.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION – Cont'd.

### COMMUNITYPASS

The River Dell Regional School District is pleased to offer our school community a convenient way to complete district forms and pay fees. River Dell is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and lowering district costs.

CommunityPass opens each summer to fill out forms and pay fees for the upcoming school year. Please watch the homepage for announcements regarding CommunityPass availability.

All new incoming families will receive an account letter from the school via email. Once you have logged in to your account, save your username and password in a safe place as this account will be used each year your child/children are in attendance at River Dell.

To access required forms and pay fees, please go to our district website, [www.riverdell.org](http://www.riverdell.org).

- On the top banner, click **Parent/Community Resources**.
- Choose **CommunityPass** in drop down.
- Choose **Required Forms for Students** tab on the left.
- Scroll down to complete CommunityPass required forms listed by class year and pay laptop and activity fees.
  - **Laptop Insurance Fee**—\$75.00 per student
  - **Activity Fee**—\$50.00 per student (student may participate in an unlimited number of sports/clubs).
- Download, print and return all other forms for 7th and 8th grade, as needed.

### GENESIS PARENT PORTAL

Genesis is a student information system which provides families with the opportunity to view and monitor their child's attendance, notify school Attendance Office regarding your child's absence, class schedule, grades, report cards and any discipline issues that may arise. The primary Guardian will be registered. Over the summer, your login information will be emailed to the address you provided in the school registration process. If you are presently a River Dell parent, your Middle School child will be added to your existing account.

**RIVER DELL MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION**

Patrick Fletcher ..... Superintendent of Schools  
Thomas Bonfiglio ..... Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**BUILDING ADMINISTRATION**

Richard Freedman ..... Principal  
John Jasinski ..... Assistant Principal

**DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

Jennifer Ali ..... Supervisor of Mathematics  
James Cooney ..... Director of Special Services  
Tiffany Correa ..... Supervisor of Professional Development & Special Projects  
Denis Nelson ..... Director of Athletics  
Lisa Torres ..... Supervisor of English and Social Studies  
Marianthe Williams ..... Director of Computer Services

**COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

Demetra Binder ..... Counselor  
Randie O’Neil ..... Student Assistance Counselor  
Marnie Ross ..... Counselor

**SPECIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Christina Barkachi ..... Speech Pathologist  
Alexandra Becker ..... School Psychologist  
Mara Campbell ..... School Psychologist  
Alison Donoghue ..... School Social Worker  
Grace Marie Lamparillo ..... Learning Disability Teacher-Consultant  
Maria Meo ..... Learning Disability Teacher-Consultant

**BOARD OF EDUCATION 2020 – 2021**

Albert Graef ..... President  
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## COUNSELING SERVICES

River Dell Middle School offers a comprehensive counseling program that is an integral part of the school's educational environment. The counselors serve as liaisons between students, school, and home. The main focus of Counseling Services is to help students reach their maximum potential by assisting them in making academic and life choices often faced during adolescence.

There are two counselors at the Middle School. *Each counselor remains with the same class for two years.* Counselors facilitate the transition from elementary school to middle school, from middle school to high school, and help students plan their educational schedules for the upcoming year.

Parents with questions should contact their child's counselor:

- Ms. Marnie Ross, 7th Grade Counselor for 2021—2022, 201-599-7254
- Mrs. Demetra Binder, 8th Grade Counselor for 2021—2022, 201-599-7256

Current 8th grade students will be scheduled for the 9th grade by their assigned high school counselor, who may also be contacted by parents with questions:

- Mrs. Barlow, (last name beginning A—Dham), 201-599-7298
- Mr. DiUbaldo, (last name beginning Dhar—Je), 201-599-7226
- Mrs. Garcia, (last name beginning Jo—Mi), 201-599-7230
- Mrs. Kirkby, (last name beginning Mo—Schi), 201-599-7224
- Ms. Nolan, (last name beginning Schn—Z), 201-599-7289

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# River Dell Middle School

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### 2021 – 2022

#### LANGUAGE ARTS

##### **ENGLISH 7**

This course provides students with a framework to meet the State’s Literacy Core Curriculum Content Standards. Students learn grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and other skills within the contexts of meaningful reading, speaking, writing, listening, and viewing experiences. Drawing from an extensive list of traditional and young adult titles in classroom, school, and community libraries, teachers engage students in strategies that promote the independent reading of assigned and self-selected works (novels, short story and poetry, plays, and works of non-fiction). Readings are also selected from a prescribed anthology and a syllabus of prescribed works. Students will begin to develop a sophisticated portfolio of writing utilizing a variety of modes.

##### **ENGLISH 8**

This course continues to provide students with a framework to meet the State’s Literacy Core Curriculum Content Standards. Students learn grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and other skills within the contexts of meaningful reading, speaking, writing, listening, and viewing experiences. Students read and respond in writing and through discussion to various fiction and non-fiction selected works from the English syllabus. A major component of the 8th grade English program includes self-selected independent reading. All students will be required to maintain a portfolio of written work to be assessed at regular intervals. Major research components comply with the scope and sequence of nationally accredited information literacy (research) skills.

##### **RD 101 7 & 8**

This is a non-graded opportunity during the course of the school day to learn about River Dell and how to navigate life as a middle school student preparing for high school. General topics that will be covered throughout the school year include, orientation to River Dell technology, social/emotional learning, organizational skills, RD resources, Drop Everything and Read, as well as homework time. These topics will be covered throughout the course of the school year.

# MATHEMATICS

## **MATH 7**

Math 7 strengthens skills from K-6 mathematics while moving forward to representing data through algebraic expressions and equations. Students will use properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions. They will extend their understanding of operations with fractions and decimals by simplifying expressions and solving equations that involve rational numbers. Students will also analyze proportional relationships and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems. Geometry content will include constructing and describing geometrical figures and solving problems involving angle measure, area, surface area, and volume. Statistical inferences and basic probability models will also be examined.

## **ADVANCED MATH 7**

*This course is designed for the exceptional math student who has demonstrated consistent success and an innate ability in mathematics. Advanced Math 7 has the same curriculum as the Math 7 course; however, the depth of understanding and level of expectation are more advanced. Math 7 strengthen skills from K-6 mathematics while moving forward to representing data through algebraic expressions and equations. Students will use properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions. They will extend their understanding of operations with fractions and decimals by simplifying expressions and solving equations that involve rational numbers. Students will also analyze proportional relationships and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems. Geometry content will include constructing and describing geometrical figures and solving problems involving angle measure, area, surface area, and volume. Statistical inferences and basic probability models will also be examined.*

## MATHEMATICS – Cont’d.

### **MATH 8**

Math 8 is designed to prepare students for the future study of Algebra and Geometry in high school. Students will solve linear equations and inequalities in one variable. They will learn about linear relationships by examining tables, graphs, and equations of lines. They will learn different methods to solve a system of two linear equations. They will also learn how to define, evaluate and compare algebraic functions. The difference between an expression and an equation will be apparent through their work with simplifying expressions, including expressions involving exponents, radicals, and scientific notation. Geometry content will include three major areas: performing transformations of figures, finding surface area & volume of solids, and identifying & using the Pythagorean Theorem.

### **ADVANCED MATH 8**

Advanced Math 8 has the same curriculum as the Math 8 course; however, the depth of understanding and level of expectation are more advanced. Advanced Math 8 is designed to prepare the students for the future study of Algebra and Geometry in high school. Students will solve linear equations and inequalities in one variable. They will learn about linear relationships by examining tables, graphs, and equations of lines. They will learn different methods to solve a system of two linear equations. They will also learn how to define, evaluate and compare algebraic functions. The difference between an expression and an equation will be apparent through their work with simplifying expressions, including expressions involving exponents, radicals, and scientific notation. Geometry content will include three major areas: performing transformations of figures, finding surface area & volume of solids, and identifying & using the Pythagorean Theorem.

## MATHEMATICS – Cont'd.

### **HONORS ALGEBRA 1**

Honors Algebra 1 is designed for the exceptional math student who has demonstrated consistent success and an innate ability in mathematics. This course combines two math classes within one school year. All content/skills from Math 8 and from high school Algebra 1 are taught at an honors level expectation within this course. The course is very rigorous and application problems are complex. Students will learn to simplify expressions involving exponents, radicals, and scientific notation. They will solve linear equations and inequalities in one variable; and use these solving skills to solve real-world problems. They will learn different methods to solve a system of two linear equations; and solve real-world problems using these methods. They will also learn how to define, evaluate, and compare algebraic functions. Geometry content will include three major areas: performing transformations of figures, finding surface area & volume of solids, and identifying & using the Pythagorean Theorem. Students will study quadratic functions in multiple ways, both solving and graphing quadratic equations. Quadratic models will be used to solve real-world applications. Finally, students will examine exponential relationships and functions.

# MATH PATHWAYS

The Math Pathways represented below are the most typical paths for students in Grades 7-12. Based on individual student needs, movement between paths is possible.

	<b>HONORS PATH</b>	<b>ADVANCED PATH</b>	<b>COLLEGE PREP PATH</b>	<b>ADVANCED PATH W/ DOUBLE IN 9TH</b>	<b>ADVANCED PATH W/ DOUBLE IN 10TH</b>
<b>7th Grade</b>	Advanced Math 7 ↓	Advanced Math 7 or Math 7 ↓	Math 7 ↓	Advanced Math 7 or Math 7 ↓	Advanced Math 7 or Math 7 ↓
<b>8th Grade</b>	Honors Algebra 1 ↓	Advanced Math 8 ↓	Math 8 ↓	Advanced Math 8 ↓	Advanced Math 8 ↓
<b>9th Grade</b>	Honors Geometry ↓	Advanced Algebra 1 ↓	Algebra 1 ↓	Advanced Algebra 1 & Advanced Geometry ↓	Advanced Algebra 1 ↓
<b>10th Grade</b>	Honors Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry ↓	Advanced Geometry ↓	Geometry ↓	Advanced Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry ↓	Advanced Geometry & Advanced Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry ↓
<b>11th Grade</b>	Honors PreCalculus AB or Honors PreCalculus BC ↓	Advanced Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry ↓	Algebra 2 ↓	PreCalculus ↓	PreCalculus ↓
<b>12th Grade</b>	AP Calculus AB or AP Calculus BC	PreCalculus or Statistics	Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry	Honors Calculus or Statistics	Honors Calculus or Statistics

The Double Option requires approval  
(see last page of Math section in the RDHS Program of Studies.)

# SCIENCE

## **SCIENCE 7**

In the 7th grade, Science principles are explored. Students investigate the interconnectedness of life and make sense of the complexity and diversity of life on Earth. Students design and conduct experiments to collect and use qualitative and quantitative data to understand the living and physical worlds, and the scientific and mathematical rules that govern them.

## **SCIENCE 8**

In the 8th grade, Science principles are explored including fundamental ideas about matter, energy, and motion. Students make sense of phenomena in physical, living, and Earth systems. Specifically, students learn how the Earth operates as a set of complex and dynamic interconnected systems, and is a part of the all-encompassing system of the universe.

# SOCIAL STUDIES

## **U.S. HISTORY/CIVICS 7**

The study of U.S. history including geography, economics, government and civics, is the study of people and events that have individually and collectively shaped our nation. This course covers American history from 1750 to 1855, providing content knowledge and engaging students in historical thinking that challenges them to think critically, consider multiple perspectives and gather evidence in support of their interpretations as they draw upon chronological thinking, historical analysis and interpretation, and historical research. Through opportunities for speaking, reading, writing, and analyzing as tools for learning, this course will help students make sense of the country in which they live, allow them to make connections between major ideas and their own lives, and see themselves as participating citizens of a democracy.

## **WORLD CIVILIZATIONS 8**

World Civilizations 8 will cover history from approximately 4000 B.C.E. to approximately 1350 A.D. Topics will include early river valley civilizations, the development of ancient cultures and societies, classical civilizations, post-Roman Europe, the rise of Islam, the crusades, and early Middle Ages in Europe. It will also include a detailed study of non-western cultures such as the Maya, the Aztecs and medieval Africa, Japan, China, and India. This is the first course in a two-year World Civilizations curriculum that concludes in the 9th grade.

# WORLD LANGUAGE

## **FRENCH 1A**

Students learn how to speak and write about themselves and others. Vocabulary topics include descriptions, family, home, school subjects, time, numbers, after school activities, eating in a restaurant, stores, the airport, and the train station. Grammar includes the present tense of *er* and *ir* verbs, as well as some irregular verbs such as *aller*, *avoir*, and *faire*. The “near future” is also taught. Other grammar includes the partitif, the use of *a* and *de*, possessive adjectives, agreement of adjectives with the nouns they modify, singulars, and plurals. Students become acquainted with the geography and culture of France and other French-speaking countries through the use of short readings and classroom discussion. Letter writing is also taught.

## **FRENCH 1B**

This course begins with a review of all grammar learned during French 1A, as well as new vocabulary. New vocabulary topics include summer activities, stores & clothing, health & daily routines, car driving, sports, winter & winter sports, and hotel vocabulary. Students continue to expand their speaking and writing ability. New grammar includes the verbs *prendre*, *apprendre*, *comprendre*, *croire*, *voir*, *conduire*, *lire*, *ecrire*, and *dire* in the present tense. They also learn the stress pronouns and the use of reflexive pronouns with certain verbs. Irregular adjectives and colors are taught. Students learn to compare items using both the comparative and superlative structure. The relative pronouns *qui* and *que* are introduced. The passé composé’ (past tense) is taught with *avoir* and *etre*. Direct and indirect object pronouns are also introduced and the pronoun *en*. Students continue to learn about the culture of Francophone countries through readings and classroom discussions.

## **SPANISH 1A**

Spanish 1A promotes a positive, communicative environment to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in Spanish. Students will begin to compare and contrast aspects of their culture and language with those of Spanish-speaking countries. Communication and cultural awareness is enhanced by addressing topics of family, school, community, geography, travel, and themselves.

## **SPANISH 1B**

This course expands on the experiences of Spanish 1A and continues the emphasis on spoken language skills, with an increasing use of reading and writing to reinforce the spoken word. Students will learn to talk about weather (summer & winter sports), health (food and good nutrition), cultural activities (art, music, theatre, movies), transportation (train & airplane travel), camping, sightseeing, and personal grooming. Students are also exposed to basic aspects of both Spanish and Hispanic cultures as it relates to our increasingly cosmopolitan world.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION / HEALTH

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH 7/8**

In the Physical Education curriculum, students participate in activities which provide:

1. opportunities and challenges for students to gain and to maintain the knowledge and procedural techniques for physical fitness conditioning;
2. a variety of team and individual sports to give students a wide basis for choosing lifetime recreational pursuits;
3. experience to enhance such social growth and developmental skills as loyalty, decision-making, camaraderie, cooperation, and a sense of sportsmanship;
4. a means of achievement, accomplishment, and success;
5. programs that meet and exceed state mandates.

The Physical Education curriculum progresses from larger motor activities through team play to an emphasis on the development of lifetime sports. The Physical Education/Health program emphasizes physical fitness, lifetime skills, sportsmanship, and teamwork. Knowledge of body systems, building positive self-esteem, and the development of lifelong health and safety habits are stressed and integrated with other curriculum areas and special events. The overall goal is to offer a challenging and varied program that is responsive to community and to student's needs.

Health education encompasses one marking period of instruction.

### **Health Curriculum 7**

1. Drug Education
2. Nutrition
3. Social and Emotional Health

### **Health Curriculum 8**

1. Drug Education
2. Sexuality
3. Social and Emotional Health

## **CYCLE CLASSES**

### **ART OF THE 20TH CENTURY 7 & 8**

This course introduces 20th Century art through a range of projects based on art styles of modern artists. The concepts of aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production are applied and reinforced throughout the program. Students will explore studio work, art history, and computer art-based projects. It offers students an opportunity to use a variety of materials and processes, working in painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, and computer art. Art 8 teaches various areas of Photoshop Elements utilizing the computer labs and wireless laptops in the middle school.

### **NUTRITIONAL LIVING AND WELLNESS 7 & 8**

This course promotes and encourages positive attitudes related to issues of healthy life styles, independent thinking, decision making, career opportunities, wise consumer choices and community service. Students learn about safe food handling, food preparation techniques, nutrition and wellness and career opportunities in the food industry. Learning activities include planning and preparing snacks and simple meals, analyzing their own food choices, practicing food etiquette appropriate to a variety of cultural, social and professional situations, and participating in service learning for the benefit of themselves and others.

### **MUSIC STUDIO 7**

This course teaches the fundamentals of music. Students learn scales, chords, and music notation, as well as the basics of digital music recording, editing, and basic sound design. Classes are conducted in our digital state-of-the-art Recording Studio and Music Lab. Wide varieties of genres of music, composers, (both contemporary and established), and music areas are researched and discussed in class.

### **MUSIC STUDIO 8**

This course is designed to nurture both passive and active skills within the setting of our professional music studio. It seeks to foster an understanding of music's nature, underlying structure, and its cultural significance through performance and listening. Students also learn composition and arranging through the use of professional music sequencing programs. In addition, students produce a multimedia project incorporating music, photography, and videography. Music of various genres is used to illuminate matters of melody, rhythm, and form with strong emphasis on elements shared among different musical styles. Students learn the elements of music technology, as well as digital recording, editing, notation, and sound design.

## CYCLE CLASSES – Cont'd.

### **S.T.E.M. 7**

S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) has become an essential educational initiative across the nation. The blending of these four areas is a natural fit when implementing meaningful hands-on problem-solving activities for students.

This course will allow students the opportunity to apply specific mathematical and scientific principles in order to develop solutions to various engineering challenges. Student's creativity and risk taking are emphasized in a design and problem-solving format that allows them to test their original solutions in an encouraging environment.

### **S.T.E.M. 8**

Building on S.T.E.M. 7 experiences, students will be challenged with more in-depth engineering problems and use more sophisticated tools and machines to solve them.

This course allows students the opportunity to apply specific mathematical and scientific principles in order to develop solutions to various engineering challenges. Students are introduced to programming and robotics and the challenges of designing and building robots, which are then programmed to perform different tasks and solve specific problems.

# PERFORMING ARTS

## **CHORUS 7 & 8**

Chorus is open to all 7th and 8th grade middle school students who enjoy singing. Students learn proper singing techniques, develop music-reading skills, and broaden their musical tastes through the study of choral literature. Concerts feature choral performances at the winter concert in December and at the spring concert in May.

## **CADET BAND 7**

The Cadet Band is comprised of 7th grade students who have been involved in previous band activities in elementary school or who can demonstrate an appropriate level of musicianship. Students work on different genres of music, culminating with the winter concert in December and with the spring concert in May.

## **CONCERT BAND 8**

The Concert Band is comprised of 8th grade students who have been involved in band activities from both the 6th and 7th grades. The Concert Band works on various elements of music, as well as performance techniques, culminating with the winter and spring concerts. In addition, “an audition only” stage band performs at the spring concert, as well as at the special Senior Citizens’ concert in May.

## **MARCHING BAND 7 & 8**

This course is designed to give the learner a comprehensive experience in musical/visual performance. Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of the precise craft of choreographed routines. The program looks to instill the beauty of music, movement, sensitivity, and freedom of responsiveness as related to multiple genres of music. The Marching Band performs at High School football games, winter and spring concerts, and at various other programs throughout the school year. **Late afternoon/evening rehearsals.**

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

### **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) 7 & 8**

This course prepares English Language Learners (ELLs) to participate successfully in our English speaking classrooms and for life in the United States. We strive to provide our ELLs with the skills necessary in speaking, listening, reading, and writing to successfully participate and learn in the mainstream classroom. At the same time, we encourage our students to maintain their native language and cultural heritage. The ESL class provides explicit English language instruction, along with support for the materials covered in the content area classes. When a student passes the exit requirements, which include the ACCESS for ELLs state test, reading and writing assessments, and teacher recommendations, the student is transitioned into the regular schedule with minimal support.

## A, B, C & D DAY SCHEDULE

- Our schedule consists of A Days, B Days, C Days and D Days.
- Weekends, vacations and holidays do not count in a cycle; in case of an emergency closing, we skip the letter and resume the cycle as scheduled.

## A, B, C & D DAY SAMPLE CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 <b>A</b>	2 <b>B</b>	3 <b>C</b>	4 <b>D</b>	5 <b>A</b>	6
7	8 <b>B</b>	9 <b>C</b>	10 <b>D</b>	11 <b>A</b>	12 <b>B</b>	13
14	15 <b>C</b>	16 <b>D</b>	17 <b>A</b>	18 <b>B</b>	19 <b>C</b>	20
21	22 <b>D</b>	23 <b>A</b>	24 <b>B</b>	25 <b>C</b>	26 <b>D</b>	27
28	29 <b>A</b>	30 <b>B</b>	31 <b>C</b>			

# GUIDANCE FAST FAQs

## **READING YOUR SCHEDULE**

### **How do ABCD Days work?**

Some of our classes (English, Math, RD 101, Chorus and Band) run on an ABCD rotation. A rotation is four days long and continues throughout the school year. While your English and Math classes will meet every day, you will also have additional time in these classes scheduled during the ABCD rotation. RD 101 will meet twice during the rotation. ABCD days are announced on morning announcements and are posted outside our main office.

### **Is Period 5/6 or 6/7 a double period?**

No, although your schedule states a Period 5/6 (if you are an 8th grader) or 6/7 (if you are a 7th grader) this does not mean it is two periods long. These periods are listed this way because at some point in between the period a bell rings dismissing one of the grades to lunch (Period 5 lunch for 7th graders and Period 7 lunch for 8th graders).

### **Where can I find my locker number and combination?**

When your final schedule is mailed home in August, you will see a three digit number on the top left of your schedule. The three digit number is your locker number. The set of numbers that follow in parenthesis is the combination. Be sure to take a look at our Locker Tutorial on the RDMS Website for instructions on how to open your locker!

### **Who is my Guidance Counselor?**

For the 2021-2022 school year, Ms. Ross will be the Guidance Counselor for 7th grade and Mrs. Binder will be the Guidance Counselor for 8th grade. Your Guidance Counselor will stay as your counselor for the two years you are here at RDMS.

## **GETTING READY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR**

### **How will I know what my homework is for each class?**

During each class, your teacher will inform you of any homework to complete and will post it in the classroom. Our most organized students write it down in a calendar or planner. In addition, on each teacher's Schoolwires and OneNote websites, they will post important information for class, which includes homework and upcoming projects as well as information about tests and quizzes. We recommend that you check each of your teacher's Schoolwires and OneNote websites every night!

## **GUIDANCE FAST FAQs – Cont’d.**

### **When are teachers available for extra help?**

Teachers are generally available before (by appointment) or after school for extra help each day of the week, except on Wednesday. If you have a question about an assignment, test, or quiz—simply ask your teacher for help! Be sure to check with your teacher when he or she is available; this information can also be found on their Schoolwires website.

### **How can my parents speak with one of my teachers?**

Every teacher can be reached directly by telephone or e-mail; contact information is available on each teacher’s Schoolwires website. If you need assistance getting in touch with a teacher, contact your Guidance Counselor.

## **HOUSEKEEPING QUESTIONS**

### **What is Schoolwires?**

Each faculty member maintains their own Schoolwires page, (including administration, club advisors, counselors, nurse, and teachers). Schoolwires includes course overview, contact information, extra help schedule, and grading policy. This link can be found on the River Dell Middle School website under Faculty/Staff. Students and parents should check Schoolwires daily. We also recommend keeping an agenda book.

### **What is OneNote?**

River Dell utilizes the Microsoft Office program, OneNote, an interactive and collaborative online notebook. OneNote allows students access to their teachers’ digital content and resources while in school and at home. Parents can access their child’s homework, assignments, notes, assessments, and projects in OneNote by simply selecting the OneNote link in Schoolwires (no password is required for this section).

### **What is Genesis?**

Genesis is our student information system. In Genesis, we keep record of your demographics, contact information, attendance, schedule, and grades, among other things. Through the Genesis Parent Portal, parents/guardians have access to their child’s attendance and grades so that they can stay informed. Progress Reports and Report Cards are also available through Genesis. All new families will receive their login information over the summer prior to the start of the new school year.

### **What is Community Pass?**

Community Pass is our system of collecting important forms and fees. Forms should be completed prior to the start of school. Every family must pay a \$75 fee annually per student for laptop insurance coverage. If a student is interested in participating in any of our clubs or sports, an annual \$50 fee is required. This one fee allows a student to participate in as many clubs or sports as they would like. All new students will receive Community Pass registration information over the summer prior to the start of the new school year.



## **GUIDANCE FAST FAQs – Cont’d.**

### **What if my contact information changes during the year?**

If you have a change in address, telephone number, or e-mail, it is important that you let us know! Please notify the Guidance office so that we may ensure your records are up to date in both Genesis and Community Pass.

### **What do I do if I am absent or know that I am going to be absent?**

If you know you are going to be absent, a parent/guardian must notify the school. We offer two convenient methods:

1. *Contact the Attendance office (preferably before 7:30 a.m.) by calling 201-599-7200, ext. 3310, each day you are absent, or*
2. *On the Genesis Parent Portal, click ATTENDANCE, then click NOTIFY ATTENDANCE OFFICE and fill out the required information online, anytime day or night.*

If you are absent due to a communicable illness, you must bring a doctor’s note and report to the Nurse’s office upon entering the building. Please visit the Health Services tab under Quick Links on the Middle School website for information concerning administering medication in school, health issues, etc. When you are absent, we encourage you to check the teachers’ Schoolwires and OneNote websites for anything you might have missed in class. If you are absent for an extended period of time, please call the Attendance line to report your absence. When you return to school, it is important to speak with each of your teachers to discuss due dates for homework/assessments you might have missed while you were absent.

### **What do I do if I am going to be late to school?**

*If you are going to be late to school, a parent/guardian must call the Attendance office to notify the school at 201-599-7200, ext. 3310. Upon arrival to school, you must sign in at the Main office and obtain a late pass for class.*

### **What do I do if I have to leave early?**

If you are leaving early, you must bring a note to the Main office (preferably during homeroom) indicating the time of your pick up. You will receive an Early Dismissal pass. You will then report to the Main office to await for your parent/guardian to sign you out.

## **GUIDANCE FAST FAQs – Cont’d.**

### **MATH PLACEMENT**

#### **My child is entering 7th grade in the fall. How is his/her Math placement determined for 7th grade?**

If a student satisfies both of the criteria below, the student is placed into Advanced Math 7; otherwise, the student is placed into Math 7.

- 6th Grade Math Class Test Average  $\geq 90\%$
- Placement Test Score  $\geq 90\%$

#### **My child currently is a 7th grader at RDMS. How is his/her Math placement determined for 8th grade?**

- If a student is currently in Math 7 and has an assessment average of  $< 84\%$ , the student is placed in Math 8.
- If a student is currently in Math 7 and has an assessment average of  $\geq 84\%$ , the student is placed in Advanced Math 8.
- If a student is currently in Advanced Math 7 and has an assessment average of  $< 85\%$ , the student is placed in Advanced Math 8.
- If a student is currently in Advanced Math 7 and has an assessment average  $\geq 85\%$ , the student is placed in Honors Algebra 1.

#### **My child is in Honors Algebra 1 in 8th grade. Does he/she take the 8th grade NJSLA Math 8 test or the NJSLA Algebra 1 test?**

Students enrolled in Honors Algebra 1 are taught both 8th grade Math content and high school Algebra 1 content. However, the student only takes one NJSLA Test—the Algebra 1 NJSLA test.

#### **How does a *teacher recommendation* impact my child’s Math placement?**

- If a student has achieved the average for placement in a level, a recommendation is not needed. For example, if the assessment average for placement into the Honors Algebra 1 class is 85 and the student has that assessment average, he/she is placed in the Honors section. No teacher recommendation is required.
- If a student falls short of a cutoff, but the teacher feels that the student is capable of doing the work, the teacher may recommend up.
- If a student or parent is not satisfied with the Math placement, the student or parent can contact the Math Supervisor, Jen Ali, to discuss any questions, concerns or requests.
- Please see the MATH PATHWAYS chart on page 13 for an overview of the most frequently taken paths in Math for grades 7 through 12.

## **GUIDANCE FAST FAQs – Cont'd.**

### **GUIDANCE FAST FAQs SUMMARY**

We have an Open Door Policy at RDMS, which means you are welcomed and encouraged to visit with your counselor to discuss any issues which may arise. Since you will have the same counselor for both 7th and 8th grades, they will be your main contact at RDMS.

We hope the GUIDANCE FAST FAQs have answered many of your questions. Please feel free to contact us with any other questions that may arise at 201-599-7255.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

*River Dell Middle School has an extensive program of extracurricular activities.  
We encourage you to become an involved RDMS student.  
Students may participate in as many clubs and activities as they would like.*

### **ACADEMIC COMPETITION CLUB**

This Club is designed to seek out opportunities for academic competition. This is an excellent place to stretch the mind and imagination in a fun, focused environment. Currently we are competing in State and National NAQT-sanctioned Quiz Bowl Tournaments. We have local competitions within River Dell as well. This club will closely align with the RDMS Projects & Performances Club.

### **MS ACCOMPANIST CLUB**

Student pianists will learn the art of accompanying while obtaining performing opportunities. Pianists will improve sight-reading skills, learn to keep a steady beat, understand how to follow another musician's interpretation, and manage basic improvisation. In addition to pianists, instrumentalists and percussionists are welcome and will obtain hands-on experience by accompanying the RDMS Choruses in the Winter and Spring Concerts. Students are afforded the opportunity to move from soloist to team player as they become part of the ensemble performance experience.

### **AMBASSADORS**

Ambassadors are a select group of 8th grade students who are nominated by a 7th grade teacher based on the student's ability to act as a leader and be a strong role-model for their peers. The goal of the Ambassadors is to provide a positive experience for incoming students, to assist school counselors in mentoring students and to represent River Dell Middle School in the community.

### **ART CLUB**

Are you an artist, or do you just like art? Join the RDMS Art Club where you will have the opportunity to create fun projects no matter what your artistic level! As a member of the Art Club, you will get to sponsor and support art activities in our school and in the community. Come and join us!

### **MS ART ENRICHMENT CLUB**

The Art Enrichment Club is structured to enhance the art offerings in the classroom and to give students further opportunities to develop their artistic skills to the fullest. The focus will be on art concepts and techniques that cultivate the students' intuitive perceptions and creative drives. The club will also provide an opportunity and appreciation to contribute to the students' creative growth as it relates to his/her physical, emotional, and intellectual development. This is an especially important opportunity for those students who do not have art in their class schedule. This club is aimed for those who have an advanced arts skill set and who have a love for the arts.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont’d.**

### **BEST BUDDIES**

Best Buddies promotes one-on-one friendships between students with intellectual/developmental disabilities and those without a disability. The club aims to break social barriers for teens, no matter their ability, to create opportunities for friendship. Best Buddies establishes friendship, social and seasonal events intended to bring the community together.

### **MS CATERERS/CHEF CLUB**

Calling all middle school chefs! MS Caterers/Chef Club offers an after school hands-on cooking and nutrition education experience. This club will emphasize nutritional awareness, food safety, team building and basic culinary skills. We will use cooking and food as tools to teach nutrition, healthy living, and life skills. Students will be involved with cooking competitions, trips to local cooking schools and food justice awareness. We use no nuts or nut-based products in our recipes, and we are conscious of safety and accommodating food allergies.

### **MS CROCHET/KNITTING CLUB**

Students will learn basic stitches such as chain stitch and single crochet to complete blankets, hats, scarves, and booties to be donated to local organizations such as hospitals, senior citizens homes, etc. Once basic skills are mastered, students will have the opportunity to master skills of half double crochet, double, and triple stitches. This club will meet Thursday mornings weekly from October through May.

### **DRAMA CLUB**

In RDMS Drama Club, students have the opportunity to explore the many sides of the Performing Arts world. Students interested in acting partake in auditions, are responsible for memorizing lines, and improving their stage presence. Students interested in stage crew explore the time and effort that goes into the creation of sets and props, lighting, and sound. Our student directors help to organize and run practices, create the playbill, and help in all areas of the production. Lastly, all of the students involved learn about advertising and promotion, and they help to fundraise for the play. In the RDMS Drama Club, the students learn that collaboration, effort, and fun are the key ingredients to a stellar performance.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB**

The Environmental Club promotes environmental awareness; develops social and life skills; maintains the pond, trees, and garden in the RDMS courtyard; and promotes reuse, reduce, and recycling programs. Students are taught the importance of proper maintenance of the water garden, its fish and plant life. Students will learn how to establish and maintain plant and herb gardens. Guest speakers will be invited to address the Club with regard to soil and gardening basics. In addition, students will look for ways to reduce our carbon footprint by promoting a recycling program in the cafeteria, and will begin and maintain a compost program with the

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont’d.**

### **FRENCH/ITALIAN CLUB**

The objective of this club will be to familiarize students with French and Italian culture. It would address the similarities and historical background between the two countries. It will touch on the language, culture, food, fashion, sports, and art of these countries. This club is an important segue for helping students to decide to pursue the French and/or Italian language in high school. It is a student-centered club where students may choose to create activities that reflect the Italian and French cultures. The students will be expected to do research into the cultural similarities and differences in order to plan the activity they choose.

### **THE GIRLS WHO CODE CLUB**

The Girls Who Code Club is based on a leading and notable non-profit organization that aims to close the gap between girls and boys in early development of computational thinking skills. The Club follows the national organization’s 13-week curriculum that takes students through the fundamentals of computation thinking, writing code, and creating a digital project that addresses a local program.

### **GRADE 7 ADVISOR CLUB**

The 7th grade Advisor organizes and facilitates certain field trips and events, such as the 7th Grade Field Day and the 7th Grade Pool Trip to Stoney Brook Swim Club in Hillsdale. During the course of the year, this group will be working closely with the 8th Grade Student Government Organization for school programs and working with the Ambassador program to help develop leaders in the 7th grade.

### **GRADE 8 ADVISOR**

The 8th Grade Advisor would create an opportunity for students to be more engaged in the middle school experience by having more class-specific activities that interest students and enhance social connections. The 8th Grade Class Advisor, along with the 8th grade students, would be responsible for planning the 8th Grade Picnic at Spring Lake Day Camp, as well as finding other opportunities to engage the 8th grade students. Examples for possible activities include an 8th grade Dinner Dance, 8th grade Movie Night, 8th grade Wellness Day, etc.

### **HOMEWORK CLUB**

At the end of the school day, the Homework Club provides students with a relaxed, informal environment in which to do homework. Students do not have to come everyday, but may drop in as needed. Dates to be determined in the fall.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont’d.**

### **LIBRARY CLUB**

Library Club members learn the workings of the school’s Library Media Center. Student aides assist with Library duties such as circulation, shelving, book repair and processing, and book displays. Club members assist the Librarian in major events such as author visits, the annual Book Fair and special events such as National Poetry Month. Interested student members may organize specialty clubs such as Book Club, Anime/Manga Club, Game Club, Code Club, and Maker Club. Other activities include Movie Fridays, field trips and fundraising for the Library collection.

### **LITERARY MAGAZINE**

Lit Mag has two very important components: creating content through creative writing, and compiling and editing the final product—the literary magazine. The first half of the year will be spent generating content for the magazine. Each meeting, you will be given a new writing prompt (some silly, some serious) and opportunities to get feedback on your writing from your fellow club members. The second half of the year, we will select the best writing pieces and artwork that reflect the students’ world in which they live. At the end of the year, the literary magazine is distributed to faculty and to students. If you love creative writing, talking about your writing with others, and showcasing your best work, then Lit Mag is the perfect place for you!

### **MATH CLUB**

Students in the River Dell Middle School Math Club are given opportunities to participate in many different competitions and challenges. Some of the competitions are: The American Math Online Challenge, American Math Competition (AMC8), Math Olympiads, Math League, and Mathcounts. The members who enjoy combining their artistic talents with their mathematical minds can take part in an MC Escher Tessellation Contest. At the bi-monthly meetings, stations are set up so that students can practice brainteasers for upcoming contests and/or challenge themselves with brainteasers.

### **NATIONAL JUNIOR ART HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Junior Art Honor Society, (NJAHHS), is a new organization that recognizes middle school students with outstanding ability and interest in the visual arts. Students create in-depth art projects that benefit student’s artistic growth and the greater River Dell Community.

### **NEWSPAPER CLUB**

Are you a writer? Do you like to take pictures, draw or conduct interviews? Are you a computer whiz? If yes, then the Newspaper Club is for you! *The River Dell Reporter* is a student-created newspaper with exciting articles about River Dell events, current events, and athletics. All students are welcome to attend and can join at any time! Be “in the know” on the latest news and join the Newspaper Club!

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont’d.**

### **MS PROJECTS & PERFORMANCES CLUB**

The purpose of the P&P Club is to challenge students to think out of the box and create solutions to real-world challenges. Each marking period will include individual and group critical-thinking challenges and a larger project-based learning opportunity. Students will be presented with a real world problem and must work together to create a viable solution using a variety of strategies and intelligences. Consider: How would YOU solve today’s problems? In what ways can we improve our school and education system? Can you create a new invention that would benefit society? What would you share in your very own Ted Talk? If these questions intrigue you, then P & P is the club for you!

### **7TH GRADE ROBOTICS CLUB**

Using math and engineering principles, 7th Grade Robotics is designed to allow the student to design and build a robot to compete locally in our Battle Bot Competition. All 7th grade students are welcome and weekly attendance is encouraged, but not mandatory.

### **8TH GRADE ROBOTICS CLUB**

Students will participate in the First Lego League where they design and build a robot to perform specific tasks.

### **SCIENCE CLUB**

The club is open to all 7th and 8th grade students with an interest in Science. The students will engage in scientific discussions, which will then be converted into hands—on activities and experiments. Students will discuss and work in multiple Science disciplines, including Life Science, Earth Science and Physical Science. Students will write about their experiments in a “how to” article that will be presented in a periodic Science Club newsletter.

### **SELECT CHORUS**

The Select Chorus is made up of 7th and 8th grade students who audition in December after the Winter Concert. These interested singers learn and perform music at a greater difficulty level than what is offered in Chorus 7 & 8. The students will perform at the Middle School Spring Concert and will attend the High Note Festival in the spring.

### **SKI CLUB**

Students are encouraged to cultivate a joy for winter sports, develop friendships with fellow skiers/snow boarders, and more importantly, to have fun learning and participating in a life-long sport. Several ski trips are scheduled during the months of January, February, and March (weather permitting). There are more than 100 students enrolled in the Ski Club.



## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont’d.

### **MS SOUND AND LIGHTS CLUB**

The MS Sound and Lights Club is open to all 7th and 8th grade students with an interest in the technical aspect of performance production. Students will learn the basics of microphone set up, the mixing board, and the lighting presets within the middle school auditorium. This Club allows students to obtain hands-on experience working in “real world” performance situations. Members of the MS Sound and Lights Club will be responsible for participation in the RDMS Winter and Spring Concerts.

### **SPANISH HONOR SOCIETY**

The Spanish Honor Society is an honors club that promotes awareness of the Spanish language and Hispanic culture in our school and in the local community. Membership is offered to Grade 8 Spanish II students who earn an A+ average or better during all four marking periods of their Spanish I year. The *Halcones Dorados*, or Golden Hawks, our chapter of the National Spanish Honor Society for Middle Schools, meets twice monthly starting in October of each year. The Society runs several fun and meaningful service projects decided on by the membership, and culminates with an Induction Ceremony in June.

### **SPELLING BEE**

Although this is not a club, participants will meet periodically to prepare for local and, if possible, statewide spelling bee contests.

***SPORTS***—*Students are required to have a physical on file with the nurse in order to participate in either Interscholastic or Intramural Sports.*

***Interscholastic***—River Dell Middle School offers the following Interscholastic athletic programs: Girls Volleyball, Boys & Girls Cross Country (fall season), Boys & Girls Basketball (winter season), and Boys & Girls Track (spring season).

***Intramurals***—Intramurals are held after school in the Gym. Activities may include: Basketball, Flag Football, Soccer, Hockey, and Volleyball. All students are welcome to participate in these popular, non-competitive activities. Dates to be determined in the fall.

### **STAGE BAND**

The band is comprised of student instrumentalists who must audition and meet certain performance standards. This select group rehearses one afternoon per week and performs at the Middle School spring concert and at the Senior Citizens concert in May. In addition, the group may participate in festival adjudication and competitions.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont'd.**

### **STIGMA FREE CLUB**

The mission of the Stigma Free Club is to give students a platform to share their voices and raise awareness around mental health. Our goal would be to empower students to educate one another, along with our community, and to create a culture of peer support within our school. The club would be open to all students—those with mental health conditions, those with family members with a condition, or students who are interested in the field or in advocacy. Together, we would like to fight the stigma around mental illness.

### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION**

The River Dell Middle School Student Government Organization is the voice of the students. The SGO helps create and implement Spirit Week, the RDMS Fall Fundraiser, the Holiday Door Decorating Contest, the Mid-Year Celebration, and the RDMS Semi-Formal. All students are welcome to attend meetings and give ideas on how to make RDMS great. Elections for officers are held in the spring of 7th grade for the upcoming 8th grade year.

### **YEARBOOK**

The Yearbook Club will be responsible for producing the annual *Black and Gold* yearbook. Students will have the opportunity to study basic photography, layout and design, and distribution. We are looking for students who are self-motivated, cooperative, and responsible. Creativity is a plus! This club meets all year.

### **YOGA CLUB**

Yoga and meditation directly help contribute to a myriad of health benefits. Yoga has been shown to improve mental focus, concentration, and eliminate social and academic stress in a student's daily life. The advantages for students include developing self-control, the relief of chronic pain and anxiety, the development of body awareness, and the positive reduction of stress. In a time where coping mechanisms are low, and daily stressors and anxiety levels are high, Yoga is a healthy alternative and positive means to successful student development. Yoga fits perfectly into our mindfulness approach at River Dell.