

## Introduction

Last Updated Friday, 27 August 2010

### The Middle Level Learner

Children in grades six through eight are most often from eleven to fourteen years old. This is a time of tremendous change in several areas: physical, intellectual, and emotional. It is a time when each child matures toward adolescence in distinctly individual ways while developing a powerful need for peer identity and group acceptance. It is a time when cultural and political values are explored and questioned. This is the time when children take their first responsible steps toward owning their futures. The children want us to recognize these things. At the North East Middle School, teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and support staff teach to the individual. Each student's readiness to learn is matched to appropriate experiences whenever possible. This allows us to be constantly aware of each student's strengths, needs, and interests. Insights and information that enhance the child's likelihood of success are shared with everyone concerned.

### The Academic Environment

In each grade, teams of educators plan and teach the academic subjects. They team with teachers from other areas to plan and teach interdisciplinary units. Teaming also allows them to share insights and information about the progress and needs of students. Students spend the majority of each day with their teams. That is their group of approximately ninety students flexibly move throughout the sixth, seventh, or eighth grade house for instruction in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. There they may also receive instruction in health, guidance, and study skills.

### Interdisciplinary Instruction

Our aim is to develop an interdisciplinary approach to instruction. There is significant value in allowing young learners to see the relevance of their various subjects to the real world. Thematic interdisciplinary units of instruction permit this view. They apply the methods and language from more than one discipline to create a central theme, issue, problem, topic, or experience.

### Student Assistance Program

The North East School District is committed to healthy student growth and development. It continues to recognize the needs for an appropriate student assistance program that will deal with at risk student behaviors among the school population. To ensure that this need is met the North East Board of School Directors has authorized the establishment of a Student Assistance program based on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's SAP model. The North East School District program shall be implemented by the North East Support Team (NEST) in coordination with the prevention, intervention, and outpatient components of the drug committee (GECAC), and the mental health services of the Hamot Institute for Behavioral Health. In addition, the on-going assistance of local community service agencies will be sought in order to best meet the needs of each individual student. The NEST program shall emphasize education, prevention, intervention, referral, and support services to all students and staff. NEST procedures will utilize uniquely different interventions based upon particular at risk behaviors. Referral of a student for service will be based on the team decision following a review of all the student's records and input from an appropriate school district staff member. The right of student and parent confidentiality will be strictly respected. The administration is authorized to utilize the NEST program as an appropriate helping measure as well as the school district's discipline code as an appropriate punitive measure.

### Athletics

Various interscholastic programs are available for all students in grades 7-8. Included are wrestling, basketball, football, and cross country. PIAA rules apply. Students are required to meet eligibility regulations. Eligibility--All students who participate in extra-curricular activities regardless of whether they are dances, assemblies, plays, concerts, ceremonies, or any unclassified activity with or representing the school shall automatically abide by the North East School District Extra-Curricular Activities Rules and Regulations.

### Exploratory

In addition to the academics and specials, all students participate in exploratory activities. These explorations are special topics offered as electives. Examples include: wellness, guidance, keyboard application, digital photography, Spain A-Z, Ceramics etc.

### Library/Media Center

The library is the "hub" of learning at North East Middle School. All students and staff have access daily to the library and related media services. The library's collection contains works of specific interest to middle level learners, multimedia products, DVD and on-line databases, and a professional library. It is a place to relax, research, and discuss.

### Computer/Technology Education

The North East Middle School respects the need of the emerging adolescent and recognizes that each child must be prepared to deal with increasing technological demands of our society. To this end, all students have access daily to a broad range of computer-related tools and applications. Included are access to the Internet, laser printers, and robotics.

Students and staff are trained to apply new technologies and associated courseware in ways that enhance and facilitate learning.

#### Exceptional Children

Each student is recognized as an individual with specific needs, interests, and strengths. For some these needs and strengths demand that the staff alters traditional methods and employs adaptive strategies and resources. This ensures more appropriate instruction and higher levels of success. The North East Middle School provides flexible programming for each exceptional student. This is done in the regular classrooms and in the resource rooms in a balance supportive of each child's needs and abilities.

#### Intramurals

Intramural programs are designed to provide all students opportunities to explore and refine skills introduced in Physical Education and other activities.