

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS**

***UNDERSTANDING COURSE SELECTION***

***AT***

***R. J. GREY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL***

***AND***

***ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL***

***For 2018-2019 School Year***

***<http://abschools.org>***

In order to help parents/guardians make informed decisions about the appropriate course placements for their children, we provide parents/guardians of incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders with information regarding the course selection process in general. In addition, information is provided from the mathematics, English, history/social studies, science, world language, performing arts, visual arts, and physical education/health departments in time for the spring course selection process.

This document is not produced as a hard copy but is posted on the A/B website, <http://abschools.org>. We update it annually.

Questions about how to navigate course selection within a given subject area should be directed to the contact person/s identified in each section. Please refer any general comments or concerns about this document to:

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Parents/guardians and educators are keenly aware that children undergo social, physical and intellectual development on their own unique timetable. During early adolescence – the time encompassed by the end of elementary school, the move through junior high and on to high school – that divergence of timetables both between and within individual youth can be truly breathtaking.

Against this reality of physical and personal development, the schools attempt the challenging task of providing students with an academic program consistent with their skills, learning needs, and interests. To meet the needs of developmentally and otherwise diverse learners, teachers have developed an array of classroom strategies. Through group work, independent projects, collaborative learning, and numerous other techniques, teachers support students' use of varied aspects of their abilities and, thus, enable students with varied learning styles opportunities to achieve. By providing varying levels of challenge within a given heterogeneous classroom, teachers can meet the needs of diverse learners within a single classroom.

Such strategies are the mark of effective teaching. In addition to employing a range of teaching approaches in classrooms, the high school and the junior high school Mathematics Departments level the courses. "Leveling" is distinct from the practice of "tracking." In a "tracked" system, once students are placed in courses at a particular level, it becomes nearly impossible to leave. In traditional tracked systems, students tended to be placed in the same track for all disciplines. In a "leveled" system like ours, students have many and ongoing opportunities to move up or down through levels when doing so becomes appropriate. Students are likely to take classes at different levels in different discipline areas. And in a leveled system, parents/guardians also have the right to override the placement decisions of their children's teachers.

In this document, we seek to provide parents/guardians with background information about the course leveling approach in each department that clarifies:

- How leveled courses differ from one another.
- The criteria upon which teachers recommend students for leveled courses.
- Important academic/curricular implications associated with being placed in a course at a given level.
- The process by which parents/guardians can influence and/or override level placements.

### **Issues to Keep in Mind as You Consider the "Right" Level Placement for Your Child**

- Some students learn at the same level across all discipline areas. Many others have stronger aptitude or interest in one or two areas and are weaker in others. Even when students have comparable aptitudes across a variety of disciplines, they are typically more interested in some disciplines than others. Therefore, it often makes sense for students to take classes in different disciplines at different levels. By varying the level, students can challenge themselves appropriately, and they can leave time in their lives for extracurricular activities, family, and social activity. Among the district's highest achieving students, only a small percentage take all-honors schedules. Doing so is extremely demanding and could be a potential source of stress.
- Students' abilities, interests and commitments evolve over time. Those who would like to move at some future date to a higher-level course in a particular discipline area may be able to do so. This document describes what is entailed in each discipline area to make such a change.
- Outside reading makes a difference. If you want to help your child learn, encourage reading and model reading yourself. Reading broadens horizons, deepens understanding, and sharpens intellectual faculties. If children make a habit of it, reading will also improve their academic achievement. The instructional leaders of the system agree that the paramount skill for academic success is reading.
- Proficient readers tend to succeed across many disciplines because they have good comprehension: of text in general, of textbooks, of test questions. Their breadth of vocabulary enhances their grasp of nuance. Habitual pleasure readers bring a breadth of context to many disciplines – literature, history, the social

sciences, science, the arts, and world language – to which they can more easily add new knowledge. Skillful reading tends to kindle the curiosity and imagination for learning. Writing and reasoning skills, maturity, and motivation all play a role in academic success at the high school level, but reading above all provides a grounding for academic success as maturity and motivation grow.

- “Doubling Up”: Within a given academic year, students at the high school often “double up” (i.e., take more than one course within a single department). Thus, a student enrolled in AE Chemistry might also enroll in Marine Biology; another student enrolled in U.S. History might double up by enrolling in Psychology; a third might enroll in Spanish and French simultaneously. Given the number of courses that most students must take within each discipline in order to meet college entrance requirements, there are limits to how much doubling up is possible within a given discipline area. But doubling up is one of the best ways for a student to “dig deeper” within a given academic area.

### **Teacher Level Recommendation and Override Processes**

*The criteria by which students are placed in particular levels vary from subject to subject. Also, the implications of placements are different in each subject area. However, some aspects of the placement process apply across subject areas.*

#### **At R. J. Grey**

As stated above, the Junior High Mathematics Department levels its academic courses.

#### **7<sup>th</sup>-Grade Level Placement in Mathematics**

Prior to the conclusion of grade 6, students will be recommended for placement into one of the two mathematics levels offered in 7<sup>th</sup> grade at R. J. Grey Junior High School: Math 7 or Math 7 Extended. Each of these levels is a Pre-Algebra course, using the same textbook and enrichment lessons to accompany the text. The 6<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers have a strong understanding of their students’ strengths and needs, based on data, assessments, and observations made throughout the school year. Our experience has been that recommendations submitted by the 6<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers have been thoughtful and appropriate. Parents/guardians are notified as to the specific placement of their child by mail.

#### **Overriding teacher recommendations for 7<sup>th</sup> grade**

If you have questions about your child’s recommended math placement, please first consult with your child’s 6<sup>th</sup>-grade teacher to better understand his/her observations. If you have spoken to your child’s teacher and still have questions regarding your child’s placement, you may contact Lisa Nichols, Junior High Math Department Coordinator at [lnichols@abschools.org](mailto:lnichols@abschools.org).

If parents/guardians disagree with the recommendation, they have a short specified period of time to pursue the override process. To do so, they must:

1. Obtain an override form from the Junior High Counseling Department.
2. Return the completed form to the Junior High office, c/o Ms. Lisa Nichols, Junior High Department Coordinator for Mathematics, within the specified period. By completing and returning this form, parents/guardians are indicating that they realize this was not the recommended placement.

Completing the override within the specified period is necessary to guarantee that your child will be placed in the desired mathematics level. Immediately after this period, the number of mathematics levels is determined, and the process of scheduling students for the next year begins. In most cases, late overrides will not be approved. Send questions by email to Ms. Lisa Nichols or Mr. William Noeth, Regional Department Leader for Mathematics.

## **8<sup>th</sup>-Grade Level Placement in Mathematics**

8<sup>th</sup>-grade mathematics at RJ Grey has three levels: Algebra 1, Math 8 Extended, and Math 8. The expectations for the Math 8 Extended and Math 8 levels are similar to that for 7<sup>th</sup>-grade. For recommendation purposes, a student's grade is based on his/her performance on tests and quizzes; homework and projects are excluded.

In addition to meeting the grade requirements, students must also demonstrate:

1. The ability to complete homework regularly.
2. The ability to perform on exams at a consistent grade level without major grade fluctuations.
3. The ability to grasp concepts, both concrete and abstract, during class.
4. The requisite problem-solving ability to apply previously taught concepts to new situations.

Successful completion of Algebra 1 prepares the students for Geometry as freshmen. Students' continued success allows them to take Calculus during their senior year. Successful completion of Math 8 Extended puts students on a path to Algebra 1 AE as a freshman and an Introduction to Calculus course as a senior. Successful completion of Math 8 puts students on a path similar to the AE students, but at a college prep (CP) level. Successful completion of 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Foundations for Algebra puts students on a path to an Algebra 1 course completed over two years. As seniors, these students move on to college prep Algebra II classes.

A student can take Calculus without having taken 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Algebra I; however, it requires an extra commitment from the student. If the student performs at an A level in Math 8 Extended, the student has two options:

- A student who has a 97% average or higher in Math 8 Extended can take Algebra I AE in AB Summer School to move on to Geometry as a freshman and then Calculus as a senior.
- The other option is to complete Algebra 1 Honors or AE as a freshman and "double up" with Geometry and Algebra II as a sophomore.

In March, 7<sup>th</sup>-grade mathematics teachers make level-placement recommendations for grade 8. In early April, a form will be sent home to parents/guardians detailing these recommendations; parents/guardians will have a specified period of time to either accept or override the placement recommendations.

- If parents/guardians have concerns about the teacher's placement recommendation, they are urged to email the teacher about the concerns.
- If the parents/guardians are still in disagreement with the teacher's recommendation, they have the right to initiate a placement override. To do so, the parents/guardians must:
  - ✓ Obtain an override form from the junior high Counseling Department.
  - ✓ Fill it out and submit it by the deadline specified on the form.

Parents/guardians may wish to call either the Junior High Department Coordinator or the Regional Department Leader if they have any questions about course expectations.

The override process ends in April or May. The exact date is sent with your child's placement recommendation. The Junior High School determines the number of classes for the following year based on the number of students signed up for each at that point. We cannot accept overrides after this because it would create unbalanced classes.

During the school year, students are not moved up from Math 8 Extended to Algebra 1. Students who are performing exceptionally well in Math 8 (97% or higher) early in the school year may be transitioned to Math 8 Extended. This would be done on an individual basis with involvement from the parent, teacher and student.

## **9th-Grade-Level Placements**

For 8<sup>th</sup> graders preparing to move to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, teachers of English, mathematics, science, social studies and world language will make level-placement recommendations. Please see the above override process, as well as the information in the high school section, below. Parents/guardians should contact either the Junior High Department Coordinator or the Regional Department Leader if they have any questions about course expectations.

### **At A.B.R.H.S.**

Our hope is that all of our students will develop schedules that provide an appropriate level of challenge for them. Because there is no single “right” answer about what courses to take, we have tried to design a process that allows for thoughtful communication and interaction among students and adults in order to ensure that each student has a collection of courses that is appropriate, balanced, interesting, and challenging.

### **Scheduling Process**

Our Pupil Course Request (PCR) process is designed to meet the goals outlined above. The process begins in late winter when the online *Program of Studies* is made available to students.

As a first step, students should discuss their goals and interests with their teachers, who will make recommendations for course levels based on the students’ performance in their classes. (For some heterogeneously grouped courses, no teacher placement recommendation is necessary.) Those recommendations will be available to students and families via the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Students, with the help of their parents/guardians, will then choose elective courses to round out the core courses recommended by teachers.

On occasion, students become interested in “overriding” a teacher recommendation. Those overrides should be undertaken thoughtfully after significant discussion with school personnel and parents/guardians. **Students in grades 9-11** must obtain an Override Form from the Counseling Center and complete it with approvals from the Department Leader, their teacher, and counselor. **Parents/Guardians of students in grade 8** must obtain an Override Form from the JH Counseling Center and complete it, as described. In addition, they must meet with the HS Department Leader on Override Night.

All changes after registration week must be made through the Counseling Center using the correct form. Change forms (non-override) will be available in the Counseling Center.

There are deadlines that apply for all course change requests. Please see current information to determine those for the coming year. Go to the high school website: <http://abrhs.abschools.org/> for this and other information.

## Understanding the Distinct Approach to Course Leveling and Course Selection in the Five Leveled-Subject Areas

*Given changes in such areas as curriculum, staff, demography, and standardized testing, the information provided in this section is subject to change on an annual basis.*

### MATHEMATICS

#### **At R. J. Grey**

Below is an outline of the grades required to advance from one course to another. Readers may refer to the chart, *Potential Sequences of Mathematics Courses, 7-12*, on page 8.

#### **7<sup>th</sup>-Grade Placement**

Students entering grade 7 are placed into levels as described earlier (see page 2).

#### **8<sup>th</sup>-Grade Placement**

- **Algebra 1** (largely parallels the Algebra 1AE course at ABRHS)  
Requires an A- or higher in Math 7 Extended
- **Math 8 Extended**  
Requires an B+ to C in Math 7 Extended  
Requires a B or higher in Math 7
- **Math 8**  
Student earned a C- or lower in Math 7 Extended  
Student earned a B- or lower in Math 7

#### **Overriding teacher recommendations for 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

Similar to entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade, parents/guardians and students have the option to override a teacher's recommendation. The parents/guardians should discuss a decision to override with their 7<sup>th</sup>-grade teacher. Information about the override process is sent home with the registration information in April.

Special notes:

- During their 8<sup>th</sup>-grade year, we do not allow students to move up from Math 8 Extended to Algebra 1. We set students up for success at all levels, so an A at the Math 8 Extended level does not mean that that student is capable of Algebra 1 work.
- Students with an A average in Math 8 have the ability to move up to Math 8 Extended. However, this student should be working toward Math 8 Extended, including doing Math 8 Extended homework and exams, to show proficiency at the Math 8 Extended level.

#### **9<sup>th</sup>-Grade Placement**

For recommendation purposes, a student's grade is based on his/her performance on tests and quizzes; homework and projects are excluded.

- **Geometry Honors**  
Requires an average of A- or higher in 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Algebra 1
- **Geometry AE**  
Requires an average of C+ to B+ in 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Algebra 1

- **Algebra 1 Honors**  
Requires an average of A or higher in Math 8 Extended
- **Algebra 1 AE**  
Requires an average of C or below in 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Algebra 1  
Requires an average of B- to A- in Math 8 Extended
- **Algebra 1 CP**  
Requires an average of C+ or below in Math 8 Extended  
Requires a B- or higher in Math 8
- **Algebra 1 Part 1 CP1** (Part 1 and Part 2 are equivalent in total to Algebra 1 CP.)  
Requires a C+ or below in Math 8
- **Foundations for Algebra** (Reviews 7<sup>th</sup>-grade material)  
By teacher recommendation only
- **Transitions Program**  
By teacher recommendation only

In addition to meeting the grade requirements, to be placed into the most appropriate level, students should also demonstrate:

1. The ability to complete homework regularly.
2. The ability to perform on exams at a consistent grade level without major grade fluctuations.
3. The ability to grasp concepts, both concrete and abstract, during class.
4. The requisite problem-solving ability to apply previously taught concepts to new situations.

For descriptions of specific high school mathematics courses, see the link for the High School Program of Studies: <http://abrhs.abschools.org/>

Some special situations/information:

1. Students in Math 8 who would like to take Algebra I AE the following year need to learn the material that the Math 8 Extended students learned. This can be done by taking Algebra I CP in summer school or by learning the equivalent material with a qualified mathematics tutor during the summer after grade 8. The Algebra I AE course does use an Algebra I text, but it moves very quickly through the first half of the text, since students from Math 8 Extended have already covered that material, and then proceeds to cover the rest of the text in its entirety, along with a good amount of supplementary material from other texts.
2. Students who attained A+ grades in Math 8 Extended and who would like to take Algebra I AE in A-B Summer School can be placed in Geometry AE if they complete that summer course with at least an 87%.
3. At the high school, all H and AE mathematics classes, beginning with Geometry, use the same text. The difference between H and AE is in the number of chapters covered (H covers the whole book and AE does about 85%) and the depth of the problems assigned. For example, in the Jurgenson Geometry text, the “C” exercises, which are quite difficult, are assigned in class and are given on tests, whereas they are not done routinely in AE courses.

#### **At A.B.R.H.S.**

From Algebra I on at the high school, students are recommended for level placement based on their performance in the present mathematics course, as follows:

- At the H level, students who attain B or higher grades for the year may continue at that level, whereas students who cannot attain B grades are recommended for follow-up AE classes.

- At the AE level, students who attain B- or higher grades for the year are recommended to stay at that level; students with C+ to C- grades are recommended to take the next course at the CP level. Students at the AE level in Algebra I or Geometry or Algebra II who maintain consistent A grades are asked if they would like to try H the following year; the extra material covered at the H level in these classes is not critical for success in the next H course.
- Students at the CP level who attain the needed C- average for the year are moved into the next course. If they maintain high A averages in Algebra I CP or Geometry CP, they are invited to attend our summer school to take the Algebra I AE course so that they can learn the missing algebra material that will allow them to successfully handle Geometry AE or Algebra II AE.
- Students who take Elementary Algebra I Part 1 CP1 proceed to Elementary Algebra I Part 2 CP1 and then to Geometry CP1 or CP, depending on their performance in the two-year algebra sequence, and then to Algebra II CP1 in grade 12.
- Students in Foundations for Algebra CP1 are recommended for an algebra class depending on their mastery of the pre-algebra material; they then move along the sequence as far as possible.

Mathematics teachers make a placement recommendation for each student based on the student's academic performance, as described above. However, according to procedures detailed in the High School Handbook, if students meet or exceed the indicated minimum average to continue to the next course in the sequence, their parents/guardians have the right to override teacher course-level recommendations.

Generally, a student must attain an average of 70 or higher in this year's mathematics course in order to continue to the next course in the sequence; for a few upper-level courses, to move on students must attain an average of 80 or higher. Some parents/guardians choose to override teacher recommendations and then hire a private mathematics tutor to support their child. In some cases this method has been successful; in others it has not.

Keep in mind the following factors as you consider the "right" mathematics level placement for your high school student:

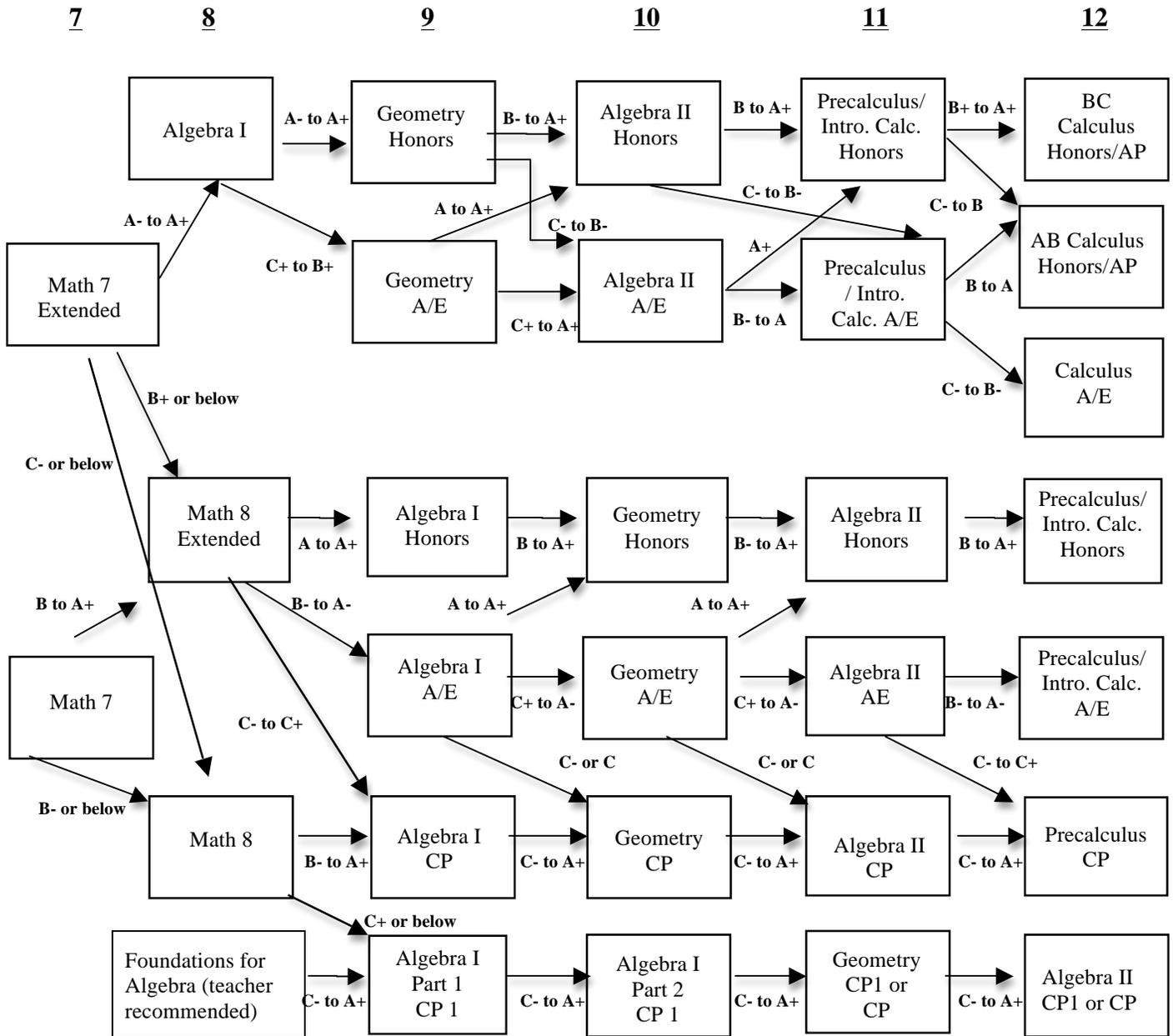
1. We believe that mastery of the material in Algebra I is absolutely critical for future success in mathematics. As the following course-sequencing map indicates, students who do not take Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and who do not shift levels upward at some later juncture in high school (see below) will not be able to take calculus in their senior year. However, we do not encourage families to override teacher recommendations and reach for Algebra I early in order to reach calculus by senior year. Rushing to take more advanced mathematics classes too early can undermine a student's developing mathematical understanding, enjoyment of the subject, and self-confidence as a learner.

Many students who do not take the most challenging mathematics level available at the high school will enroll in senior year in either Precalculus/Introduction to Calculus H or AE. The last two months of these courses is calculus; the last two units are titled "Introduction to Limits" and "Introduction to Differential Calculus." When they arrive in college, students from these classes have found themselves quite well prepared for collegiate Calculus I.

2. Students who do not take Algebra I in grade 8 have two avenues later on if they do want to take calculus in high school.

After 8<sup>th</sup> grade, they can attend the summer class in Algebra I AE, described above. This is permitted if they were solid A students in Math 8 Extended. Alternatively, they can take Algebra I H or AE in grade 9 and then, if they demonstrate in grade 9 by their high grades and strong work ethic that they are capable and interested, take two mathematics courses – Geometry and Algebra II in grade 10.

## Potential Sequences of Mathematics Courses, 7-12



The chart above lists the mathematics courses Grade 7 through Grade 12. Advancement to the next course is based upon student achievement. Each subsequent course in a level sequence is based upon the curriculum from the previous math course in that same level at the high school. To continue in a course sequence, students need a C- or better grade.

If students wish to advance a level (e.g. A/E to Honors), they may need to make up material they have missed due to the increased pacing and depth of the higher-level courses. To advance a level, students need an A or A+ in their present level and their present teacher's recommendation.

Key: A/E = Accelerated/Enriched CP = College Preparatory CPI = College Preparatory 1

Note: Parental overrides are accepted so long as the parent(s) meet with the math teacher in the junior high or Mr. Noeth in the high school to discuss the change.

3. Movement from CP to AE at the high school **requires** summer catch-up work. For example, Algebra I CP covers about 2/3 of the content in Algebra I AE and does not cover the more difficult problems covered in AE. Thus, in any given year, students could not possibly go from CP to AE without filling the gaps. Likewise – and this is illustrative of various pedagogical differences between the course levels – at the CP1 and CP levels, teachers provide a supported, structured review process and “practice test” before every test and most quizzes after first term. This level of support is not provided at the AE or H level. For these reasons, a move from CP to AE must be considered very carefully.

## **Math Textbooks**

### **High School**

Foundations for Algebra CP1	<i>Mathematical Connections</i> , 1997
Algebra I H	<i>Algebra I</i> . Dolciani, 1992
Algebra I AE	<i>Algebra I</i> . Glencoe, 2005
Algebra I CP	<i>Algebra I</i> . Glencoe, 2010
Elementary Algebra I Part 1 CP1 and Part 2 CP1	<i>Algebra I</i> . Glencoe, 2001
Geometry H and AE	<i>Geometry</i> . Jurgensen, 2011
Geometry CP	<i>Geometry</i> . Glencoe, 2001, 2010
Algebra II H	<i>Algebra II</i> . Brown & Dolciani, 2010
Algebra II AE	<i>Algebra II</i> . Brown & Dolciani, 2010
Algebra II CP	<i>Algebra II</i> . Glencoe, 2010
Calculus; BC Calculus H/AP; AB Calculus H/AP	<i>Calculus: Graphical, Numerical and Algebraic</i> by Finney, Demana, Waits, and Kennedy. 2003, 2007, 2011 editions.
Precalculus/Introduction to Calculus H or AE	<i>Advanced Mathematics: Precalculus and Discrete Mathematics with Data Analysis</i> . Brown. 2010

### **For further information, please contact:**

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- Ms. Lisa Nichols Junior High Department Coordinator for grades 7-8  
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## ENGLISH

### **At R. J. Grey**

The continuing development of communication skills is the primary focus of the R. J. Grey English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. The overall learning goals for the students are the following:

- To write for a variety of purposes: to support an idea, to tell a story, to inform or explain.
- To read, comprehend, and analyze a variety of literary texts.
- To read, comprehend, and analyze a variety of informational texts.
- To demonstrate proficiency in English grammar and usage while speaking and writing.
- To demonstrate presentation skills.
- To use collaborative skills for a common purpose.

The specific skills and objectives for each grade align with the Common Core State Standards for Massachusetts. Further information can be found on our district curriculum website:

<http://www.abschools.org/departments/curriculum/curriculum-standards>.

Thematic units and genre studies comprise the curriculum content. Each unit consists of a variety of challenging texts and activities that address the curriculum skill standards. Students are actively involved in a range of activities within the communication spectrum, either individually or with groups of varying sizes. The units, from which teachers choose according to their needs and interests, are divided between grades seven and eight. Examples of units include: Conflict, The Environment, Historical Perspectives, Self-awareness/Identity, Cultural Perspectives, Justice, War and Peace, and Memoir. Genre studies include: Short Story, Poetry, Biography, Literary Non-fiction, Mystery, and Drama/Shakespeare. Additional units are developed and others refined as new readings, materials and/or strategies to nurture student learning emerge. To the extent that time allows, teachers work with their other team teachers to weave curriculum concepts together in interdisciplinary units.

Each unit is designed to reflect the interests and needs of the early adolescent. In many units, to provide for individual differences and interests, students have a choice of readings. They are introduced to several novels or texts, varying in story line and reading difficulty but all on the unit theme. Students also may have independent reading opportunities throughout the year. The choice of thematic units and the literature involved in the unit may vary from team to team and year to year; however, the skill objectives and standards are consistent for all students.

### **At A.B.R.H.S.**

Four years of high school English are required to graduate from A.B.R.H.S. As students prepare to leave R. J. Grey, English teachers will recommend most of the 8<sup>th</sup>-grade class for English I, a heterogeneous class. A smaller number of students will be recommended for honors-level English. Students who require more instructional supports will be recommended for placement in specialized English programs.

Students in honors and heterogeneous classes read the same set of core texts. Beyond the required works, students in advanced classes will read additional, more challenging titles and will be expected to read in greater depth and with a greater degree of independence.

In all 9<sup>th</sup>-grade English classes, students are regularly expected to complete writing assignments. At the heterogeneous level, writing instruction is focused on developing students' thinking to support an argument, use of evidence to support an argument, and ability to organize effectively. At the honors level, in addition to reinforcing these skills, teachers expect students to build more complex, nuanced arguments and to attend to matters of style.

Teachers recommend students for honors English based on criteria we have found to be reliable predictors of success. These criteria include:

- A proficiency with language, both spoken and written.
- An ability to compose a statement of argument and support it logically and fully with evidence from a text.
- A love of reading.
- The skill to read with insight, coupled with the maturity to consider a variety of points of view regarding a piece of literature.

In grades 10 and 11, English courses are offered at the Honors/AP (H), the Accelerated/ Enriched (AE), the College Preparatory (CP), and the College Preparatory 1 (CP1) levels. In grade 12, English classes are offered at the Honors/AP (H), Heterogeneous, and College Preparatory 1 (CP1) levels. Heterogeneous senior level courses include English 4 with Senior Project and topic-based classes..

There are differences in the level of challenge in Honors, AE, and CP English classes. Students who have been succeeding in upper-level English classes during their freshman and sophomore years have developed a facility with language that ensures their progress as they continue in advanced English courses in the junior and senior years. However, by its nature, English allows for more movement among levels. In English classes, whenever students acquire the core reading, communication, and thinking skills, and whenever they develop sufficient interest in the subject, and combine all of these with strong work habits and a willingness to take responsibility for the additional workload, they can succeed in upper-level English courses.

**For further information, please contact:**

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## HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES

### **At R. J. Grey**

Social Studies at the junior high is comprised of a seventh-grade American studies course, entitled *Voices of America*, and an eighth-grade course, entitled *Beyond the Single Story: Comparative Cultures*. Through a variety of sources, with special emphasis on primary sources, both courses encourage students to think critically, be respectful of differences and varied points of view, draw connections between history and the events of today, and be informed active citizens. Social studies classes at the junior high are heterogeneously grouped.

In Grade 7, students are first introduced to the concept of identity, a theme throughout the school year. They begin to understand the numerous factors that shape their own identities. Through this understanding, students coming to the junior high from many different elementary schools come to recognize similarities, differences, and shared interests with their classmates, providing opportunities for establishing connections and friendships. This understanding allows for a safe and respectful classroom environment that encourages multiple perspectives and points of view. It also helps create a sense of community throughout the school.

From individual identity, students will then begin to gain an understanding of national identity. They study the founding documents - the *Declaration of Independence*, *Constitution*, and *Bill of Rights* - as the foundation of the “American Promise” of equality, justice, liberty and opportunity. Throughout the rest of the year, students ask themselves to consider to what extent we, as a nation, have lived up to those stated ideals for different people. How has the “We” in our *Constitution*’s “We the People” changed over time? Specific focus is on the historic experiences of women, African Americans, and immigrants in order to help students make connections to important political, social, and economic issues today.

In Grade 7, critical thinking skills are formally introduced and reinforced repeatedly throughout the school year. These skills include summarizing information to draw conclusions, making inferences,

and using supporting evidence. Students learn to actively read a variety of primary and secondary sources. Organization and study skills are also emphasized. These skills are reinforced and built upon in Grade 8.

The eighth-grade curriculum reinforces the environment of respect established in Grade 7 and begins the year by exploring our “cultural lens” and the impact it has on one’s view of the world. The essential question – “What is the danger of a single story?” – helps guide the curriculum. Its primary focus on just two cultures, those of Iran and China, allows the many layers of these cultures – literature, belief systems, history, the arts, politics and current events – to be uncovered and more deeply understood. Throughout both units, students consider the themes of power, the legacy of the past, and the influence of ideology.

Critical thinking and student skills introduced in seventh grade are further developed in eighth grade. A new 21<sup>st</sup>-century skill, identifying a credible source, is introduced and practiced as well. This skill is integral in navigating the online world of eighth graders. At the end of the school year, students apply these skills as they independently research one of four countries: China, India, Russia or South Africa, to identify and understand how the themes of power, history, and ideology impact the culture of the country researched. Lastly, students present their research to their classmates, ensuring that they all learn many “stories” about these four cultures.

### **At ABRHS**

Considerations that guide level recommendations for English classes are good starting points for determining appropriate levels in high school social studies classes as well: proficiency with language, strength as a reader and writer, enthusiasm for subject matter, and capacity to attend to multiple points of view.

All students are required to take a three-year social studies core curriculum, which begins with World History and continues with a two-year sequence of U.S. History and Government. This configuration addresses topics and skills in world history not covered in the eighth grade. It also allows for an in-depth consideration of the development of the American governmental system. The core curriculum is offered at the H/AP, AE, CP, and, in some cases, CP1 levels. In the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the World History course is also offered through the Transition Program, by teacher recommendation only. For grades 9-11, the core courses are also offered at the CP1 Foundations level, which offers a more individualized approach to the curriculum. Overall, the chronologically sequenced units and overarching themes are consistent across levels. The major differences across levels are the amount of reading required, the expectations regarding written work, the level of detail and abstraction that students must handle, and the sophistication of classroom discussion.

As the eighth-grade staff makes level recommendations, they evaluate students’ demonstrated abilities in reading and writing. In addition they will consider students’ consistency of performance, their ability to organize and synthesize materials and thoughts, and their level of enthusiasm for the subject matter.

Leveling decisions in Social Studies are sometimes more flexible than in the other subject areas and may reflect a student’s interests and needs in a given year. Students may successfully move from a lower-level course to a higher-level course from one year to the next, so long as they have the reading and writing skills – plus the enthusiasm and time – to support a more-detailed and abstract approach to work. In addition, some of the electives offered to older students require different skill sets than the core required courses, which allows students to experiment somewhat with leveling options.

A special option exists for sophomores: American Studies AE. Team-taught by a social studies teacher and an English teacher, the history and English classes are taught during two contiguous periods. Although the curriculum includes the same major units from the two disciplines that students would encounter in “regular” sophomore English and social studies classes, the American Studies faculty is also able to illustrate American history through works of literature. Conversely, English teachers are able to place their literature offerings in a larger and more complete historical context. Class work – including presentations, tests, and field trips – can be more flexibly scheduled.

Sophomores, along with juniors and seniors, may opt to take Facing History and Ourselves, a course that addresses the Holocaust, factors associated with genocide, and other genocides over time. Beginning in the junior year, students may select from a wide variety of elective courses offered by the department. Leveled courses include Psychology (H/AP seniors only, AE and CP juniors and seniors), European History (H/AP seniors only), and International Relations (H seniors only). Non-leveled courses include the year-long Economics class and semester classes: You and the Law, Political Science, and Sociology. The leveled electives typically require considerable reading and research and/or integration of concepts. The non-leveled courses also involve analytical reading and writing, but in addition, they focus on current events and projects. Consequently, appropriate course selections reflect a combination of individual skills, available time, and enthusiasm.

**For further information, please contact:**

- Mr. David Green, Department Leader  
(978) 264-4700, x3413; [dgreen@abschools.org](mailto:dgreen@abschools.org)
- Ms. Kellie Carter, Junior High Department Coordinator for grades 7–8  
(978) 264-4700, x3313; [kcarter@abschools.org](mailto:kcarter@abschools.org)

### SCIENCE

The science curriculum 7–12 encourages students to utilize the process of scientific inquiry to discover and interpret scientific knowledge. The curriculum is designed to support a variety of teaching strategies, including cooperative, peer, and project-based learning; lecture; group discussions; and audio-visual presentations. Throughout all grades and courses, we emphasize the laboratory as a focal point for learning.

#### **At R. J. Grey**

In the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, all science classes are heterogeneously grouped. The 7<sup>th</sup>- and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade science curriculum promotes conceptual and skill development, as well as student interaction. A range of topics in physical, biological, earth/space, and environmental science is covered; in addition, the curriculum aims to explore the interrelationships between disciplines. Our junior high science program introduces the students to myriad scientific themes and topics, imparts the fundamentals necessary for a successful transition to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and prepares them for the 8<sup>th</sup>-grade MCAS exam.

#### **At A.B.R.H.S**

The graduation requirement for science is two years of science, one of which must be biology. The core courses of Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics are content specific classes that are aligned with the Massachusetts Science and Technology/ Engineering Curriculum Framework [STE] and are defined as “lab-science” classes. The science curriculum in the core classes is designed so that students will engage in the process of science through scientific inquiry and application of the underlying scientific concepts. Students will use qualitative as well as computational thinking to analyze and interpret data. They will develop the necessary skills to generate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, evaluate scientific claims and provide evidence for scientific conclusions. The sequence of skill development is designed for students to progress from Earth Science to Biology to Chemistry to Physics, although this is not the only appropriate pathway available to students.

The 8<sup>th</sup>-grade science teachers will recommend students for Earth Science (H, AE, CP, CP1, CP1 Transition), Biology (H), or Foundations of Science Life Sciences (CP1). The recommendation will be based on 8<sup>th</sup>-grade science grades, together with an overall assessment of student skills and abilities. The intent is to match the student’s current skill set with the appropriate class and level. This will allow the student to build a strong foundation of science skills in order to successfully progress through the high school science curriculum. Students who are considering taking an AP class in science should make sure that they have developed the

strongest possible foundation of science skills. Many students are able to develop a stronger foundation in their science skills by taking biology in their sophomore year and are more prepared to successfully take an AP class in science in their junior or senior year. 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students who are recommended for Earth Science and honors Biology have access to AP classes in science for their junior and/or senior year.

The Program of Studies provides details for all of the science course offerings.

### **Science Course Offerings**

<u>9<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>	<u>10<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>	<u>11<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>	<u>12<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>
<b>Biology</b> (Honors)	<b>Biology</b> (H, AE, CP, CP1)	<b>Chemistry</b> (H, AE, CP)	<b>Physics</b> (H/AP, AE, CP)
<b>Earth Science</b> (H, AE, CP, CP1, CP1 Transition)	<b>Chemistry</b> (H, AE, CP)	<b>Physical Science</b> (CP, CP1)	<b>Physical Science</b> (CP, CP1)
<b>Foundations of Science</b> <b>Life Sciences</b> (CP1)	<b>Earth Science</b> (H, AE, CP, CP1)	<b>Advanced Biology</b> (H/AP) (2 <sup>nd</sup> year course)	<b>Advanced Biology</b> (H/AP) (2 <sup>nd</sup> year course)
	<b>Foundations of Science</b> <b>Life Sciences</b> (CP1)	<b>Advanced Chemistry</b> (H/AP) (2 <sup>nd</sup> year course)	<b>Advanced Chemistry</b> (H/AP) (2 <sup>nd</sup> year course)
		<b>Environmental Science</b> (H/AP)	<b>Environmental Science</b> (H/AP)
		<b>Anatomy and</b> <b>Physiology</b> (Semester)	<b>Anatomy and</b> <b>Physiology</b> (Semester)
		<b>BioEthics</b> (Semester)	<b>BioEthics</b> (Semester)
		<b>Engineering Principles</b> (Semester)	<b>Engineering Principles</b> (Semester)
		<b>The Human Body</b> (CP1/Semester)	<b>The Human Body</b> (CP1/Semester)
		<b>Marine Biology</b> (Semester)	<b>Marine Biology</b> (Semester)
		<b>Science and the</b> <b>Environment</b> (CP1/Semester)	<b>Science and the</b> <b>Environment</b> (CP1/Semester)

**For further information, please contact:**

- Mr. David Baumritter, Regional Department Leader for grades 7–12  
(978) 264-4700, x3473; [dbaumritter@abschools.org](mailto:dbaumritter@abschools.org)
- Ms. Elizabeth Broadwater, Junior High Department Coordinator for grades 7–8  
(978) 264-4700, x3378; [ebroadwater@abschools.org](mailto:ebroadwater@abschools.org)

### **WORLD LANGUAGES**

Acton–Boxborough students typically begin their formal language studies at Raymond J. Grey Junior High School, where they elect French or Spanish in grade seven. It is a two-year program, equivalent to French I or Spanish I at the high school. The curriculum is designed for the middle school student by allowing more time for practice, hands-on activities, games, music, and cultural experiences. The students will learn the rudiments of the language that they have selected, while developing an appropriate proficiency level in the three

communicative modes: Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational. Seventh and eighth graders study language as a core subject on their junior high team.

1. By the conclusion of their junior high language studies, those students who have earned a final grade of 70 or higher in grade eight are ready to continue their study of French II or Spanish II at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School. In the spring of grade eight, during the high school course selection process, world language teachers will recommend grade eight students for French II or Spanish II at the appropriate ability level grouping: Non-leveled (Spanish only), College Preparatory, Accelerated/ Enriched, or Honors. This recommendation will be based upon a student's grade, as well as other factors: motivation, work ethic, writing and reading proficiency, and speaking ability. Grade eight students transition well into the recommended course since the French II and Spanish II programs build upon the R. J. Grey Junior High curriculum, and teachers in both buildings work collaboratively to properly sequence students from grade seven through twelve.
2. At Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, most students will continue their language of choice from the junior high. They also have the option of beginning the study of another or of "doubling up" by starting an additional language, may it be French, Spanish, Latin, or Chinese. (See #4, below, and *Potential Sequence of World Language Courses*, on page 17.) *Grade eight students who would like to elect two languages for their freshman year* should plan their schedule carefully with their grade eight counselor, since carrying six demanding courses in one's freshman year is not recommended. In order to accommodate two world languages, it may be advisable to postpone a required course.
3. *For students who have not met with success in their junior high language studies (those who have earned a final grade of 69 or lower in grade eight)*, world language teachers will recommend French I, Mandarin Chinese I, Latin I non-leveled, Spanish I non-leveled or Spanish II non-leveled at the high school. With added maturity and the further development of study, organizational, and/or language skills, these students may indeed be successful at the high school.
4. *Students who have not begun their language studies in junior high* also have options for beginning their studies at ABRHS (see *Potential Sequence of World Language Courses*). In an effort to meet the different needs of our beginning language learners, the department offers several options for studying first-year Latin, French, Spanish or Chinese.

For students who prefer to study a classical language that focuses on reading, grammar, vocabulary and Roman culture, the department offers **Latin**.

**Latin I** (non-leveled) is an introductory course for the novice language learner. This course has been designed to move at a medium pace as they learn to read and write Latin through a variety of methods and strategies. Focus areas will include grammar, prefixes, suffixes, word roots, Roman history, and Roman culture.

For students who prefer to study a modern language that focuses on listening and speaking, as well as reading, writing, and culture, students may elect French, Spanish or Chinese.

**French I** (non-leveled) is an integrated approach to language learning that includes the study of grammar. This course teaches the equivalent of two years of junior high language instruction in one year. It is recommended for those with strong language skills – that is, for those with grades of B- or higher in their English courses.

**Spanish I** (non-leveled), which is open to all language learners, is an integrated approach to language learning that includes the study of grammar. This course teaches language learning at a moderate pace. Slower-paced instruction and repetition help the students to acquire vocabulary and structure. Students begin to speak, read, and write Spanish by understanding, re-telling, expanding, revising, and creating stories, dialogues and visual presentations. Spanish I non-leveled students will continue at this moderate pace in Spanish II non-leveled.

**Chinese I** (non-leveled) is an integrated approach to language learning that includes the study of grammar. It is an introduction to spoken Chinese, using the Pinyin system of Roman letters. Students learn to converse simply and are introduced to the writing of Chinese in simplified characters. Students will begin to develop an appreciation of Chinese culture that will better prepare them to interact in a global society.

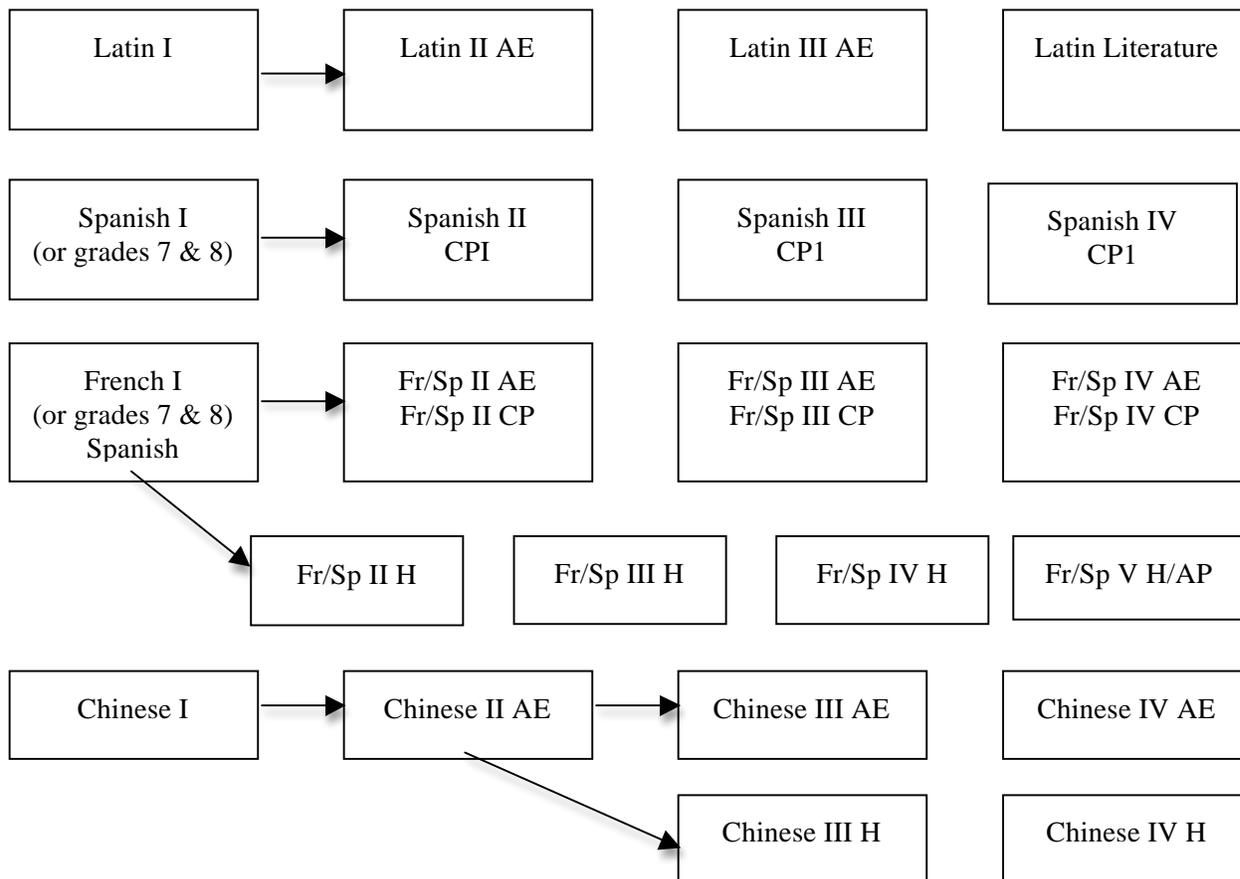
To determine which language offering best meets the needs of a student initiating new language study at the high school, a junior high student should meet with the Junior High World Language Department Leader in the spring of grade 8 for a course recommendation.

Once at the high school, students will progress through language courses as indicated in the *Potential Sequence of World Language Courses* chart. World language teachers will recommend an appropriate course and level for their students. World language students are not “tracked”; there are many instances of students who move to a higher or lower ability-level grouping throughout their sequence of language studies. However, due to the building-block nature of language learning, it becomes increasingly difficult to move to a higher ability level after year two of language study. In addition, there are some courses that are sequential in curriculum content (Spanish I non-leveled – Spanish II non-leveled; Spanish II CP – III CP; Spanish IV CP – V CP; French II CP – III CP; Spanish III AE – IV AE; French III AE/IV CP – IV AE/VCP). Therefore, a teacher would not generally recommend that a student progress, for example, from II CP to III AE. Even when a teacher does recommend that a student move to a higher ability level (generally 2CP to 3AE or 2AE to 3H), a student should prepare himself or herself for the next course with study over the summer in order to avoid any gaps in the understanding of structure or mastery of vocabulary.

A frequently asked question is: “How many years of language study are required for graduation from A.B.R.H.S.?” The answer is “none at this time.” Of course, many colleges have entrance requirements in world languages. For example, the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education has established a minimum requirement in languages for admission to the four-year state colleges and universities: two years of one foreign language. Very competitive schools look for students who have studied one language in depth – i.e., for four or five years. Students are advised to consult particular colleges of interest for their specific admission and placement requirements in order to keep their options open.

All A.B.R.H.S. world language students will have opportunities to participate in Exchange Programs, Community Service activities, and study/travel abroad when offered. In addition, A.B.R.H.S. offers students some opportunities that they may not have had before. For instance, students may access the digital multi-media language laboratory, not only as part of their language class but also outside of class for individual practice.

## Potential Sequence of World Language Courses



Placement from first year of language at high school or from 8<sup>th</sup> grade:

- Honors: 90-100
- Accelerated/enriched level: 80-89
- College preparatory class: 70 or above

In addition to this criterion of grade achievement, teachers will take into consideration the following:

- ✧ competency regarding listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills
- ✧ ability to retain and use new vocabulary and expressions
- ✧ facility with learning and using new grammar and verbs
- ✧ consistent preparation of daily homework assignments
- ✧ self-discipline and positive attitude toward second language acquisition
- ✧ readiness with materials and paperwork for daily class

**Grades: A grade of 70% or higher is required to continue to the next year.**

In recognition of achievement in language studies, the high school supports local chapters of the National French, Latin, Spanish, and Chinese Honor Societies. Recipients of our outstanding course achievement awards in each level are recognized at the end of the school year. We also have the Seal of Biliteracy, an award given by a school or district in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in two or more languages by high school graduation. A bill to establish a state seal of biliteracy was signed by Governor Baker in November of 2017. This seal as attained by students in their senior year provides evidence to universities and businesses that students have attained proficiency in a second language, an important 21<sup>st</sup>-century skill.

Students are eligible to apply for the Seal of Biliteracy in their senior year. Students will participate in the administration of a proficiency test and may earn a silver seal for intermediate-mid language proficiency, a gold seal for intermediate-high proficiency and a platinum seal for advanced-low language proficiency.

The school district's program is, of course, only the beginning. The long-term goal of our grade seven through twelve program is that our students use and enjoy their world languages beyond the confines of the Acton-Boxborough School District. Our intent is to offer them an excellent start toward this end.

**For further information, please contact:**

- Ms. Sinikka Savukoski, Regional Department Leader for grades 7–12  
(978) 264-4700, x3473; [ssavukoski@abschools.org](mailto:ssavukoski@abschools.org)
- Ms. Jean Diesso, Junior High Department Coordinator for grades 7–8  
(978) 264-4700, x3378; [jdiesso@abschools.org](mailto:jdiesso@abschools.org)

**The Following Disciplines Are Not Leveled, But Many Courses Have Prerequisites**

**PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT**

Within the Performing Arts Department, courses are not leveled. The department offers courses that fall into the “heterogeneous” category in determining class rank. These grades do not contribute to a student’s “Q.P.A.”; however, they do contribute to a student’s “G.P.A.” A wide range of students will be involved in these courses; for example, our band will have a range of musicians from beginner to highly advanced. The band director is able to assign parts that will suit all students’ needs and abilities.

**At R. J. Grey**

The following junior high school courses are taught pass/fail and have no prerequisites:

- Grade 7 Chorus
- Grade 8 Chorus
- Grade 7 Music – Exploratory
- Grade 8 Drama – Exploratory
- Grade 7 String Orchestra (It is recommended but not required that students have prior experience on a string instrument.)
- Grade 8 String Orchestra (It is recommended but not required that students have prior experience on a string instrument.)
- Grade 7 Band (It is recommended but not required that students have prior experience on a band instrument.)

- Grade 8 Band (It is recommended but not required that students have prior experience on a band instrument.)

The following junior high school programs have some entry requirements.

- ✓ Dramatic productions are offered as an after-school activity. Open auditions are held for all interested students.
- ✓ Jazz Band is offered as an after-school activity. Students must be members of the band program to participate. Some auditioning may be required depending on instrumentation.
- ✓ Select Choir is offered as an after-school activity. Students must be members of the chorus program to participate.

### **At A.B.R.H.S**

The following high school Performing Arts courses have no prerequisites or requirements:

- Band (It is recommended but not required that students have prior experience on a band instrument.)
- String Orchestra (It is recommended but not required that students have prior experience on a string instrument.)
- Color Guard
- Concert Choir
- La Capella (9<sup>th</sup>- and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade women)
- Music Theory and Technology
- History of Rock & Roll and Contemporary Music
- Acting I
- Playwriting
- Introduction to Technical Theater
- Audio-Visual Media Technology (listed under Career Exploration in the Program of Studies)
- Musical Theatre and Dance (offered every other year / will not be offered in 2018/19)

The following high school courses have some kind of prerequisite or requirement:

- ✓ Jazz Band (by audition only. Students must be enrolled in Band to be eligible to audition)
- ✓ Chamber Choir (by audition only)
- ✓ Madrigal Singers (by audition only)
- ✓ Drama: Improv (Acting I) (offered every other year / will be offered 2018/19)
- ✓ Advanced Drama: Improv (Drama Improv)
- ✓ Acting II (Acting I) (offered every other year / will not be offered in 2018/19)

### **For further information, please contact:**

- Mr. Mark W. Hickey, Director of Performing Arts, K-12  
(978) 264-4700, x3415; [mhickey@abschools.org](mailto:mhickey@abschools.org)

## VISUAL ARTS DEPARTMENT

### **Philosophy**

The Visual Arts program is designed to nurture students' development as visual learners, foster a lifelong appreciation for the visual arts, and lay a strong foundation for participation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century's thriving "creative economy." Central to all this are the "Studio Habits of Mind."\* These include the abilities to:

- **Develop Craft:** Practice and apply artistic techniques using selected tools and materials
- **Engage and Persist:** Understand that art making involves problem-solving, practice, and perseverance
- **Envision:** Visualize and plan as part of their art making
- **Express:** Create artwork that conveys meaning, ideas, feelings, and personal meanings
- **Observe:** Look at the world around them and consider aesthetic possibilities and ideas
- **Reflect:** Contemplate and articulate ideas about their art making and the art making of others
- **Stretch and Explore:** Experiment, take risks, and explore ideas in their art making
- **Understand the Creative Economy:** Learn about art history and current practices in the Creative Economy and share their artwork with the broader community.

### **At R. J. Grey**

All grade 7 and grade 8 students are required to take an Art Exploratory each year: Art 1 in grade 7, Art 2 in grade 8. The units of study in these courses explore a wide variety of art mediums, such as drawing, painting, hand building with clay, plus many more diverse art experiences. In addition, seventh- and eighth-grade students may choose from a selection of trimester-long visual art electives. While most of the high school art courses focus on a specific media, the R. J. Grey program provides a broad experience so that students may make informed choices when they get to high school.

### **R. J. Grey Visual Arts Courses, 2018-19**

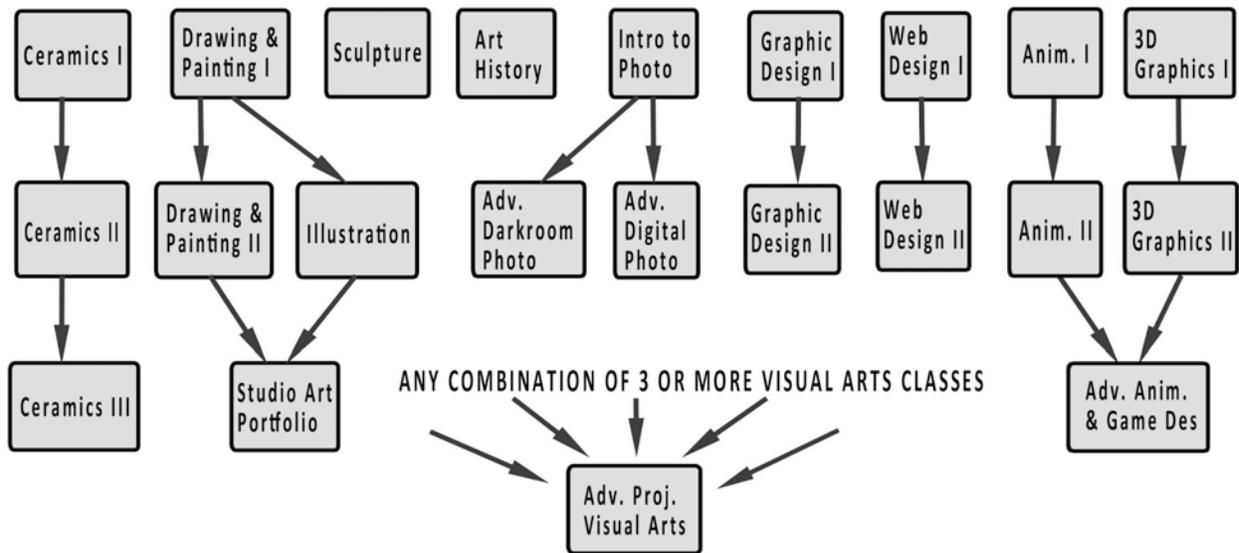
- Art 1 Exploratory: Grade 7 – every other day, ½ year (*meets for 45 class periods*)
- Art 2 Exploratory: Grade 8 – every other day, ½ year (*meets for 45 class periods*)
- Art Elective: Grades 7 and 8 – every other day, ⅓ year (*meets for 30 class periods*)
- Art Elective: Grade 8 – every other day, all year (*meets for 90 class periods*)

### **ABRHS**

The Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Visual Arts program offers 22 courses that span a wide variety of traditional and digital media, two and three-dimensional art forms, as well as interdisciplinary approaches.

\* Hetland, Lois; Winner, Ellen; Veenema, Shirley; Sheridan, Kimberly M. *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Art Education*, Teachers College Press, NY, 2007.

## AB VISUAL ARTS PATHWAYS



### ABRHS Visual Arts Courses, 2018-19

#### Ceramics

- Ceramics I
- Ceramics II (*prerequisite: Ceramics I*)
- Ceramics III (*prerequisite: Ceramics II*)

#### Studio Art

- Drawing and Painting I
- Drawing and Painting II (*prerequisite: Drawing and Painting I*)
- Illustration (*prerequisite: Drawing and Painting I*)
- Studio Art Portfolio (*prerequisite: Drawing and Painting II or Illustration*)

#### Photography

- Introduction to Photography
- Advanced Photography (*prerequisite: Introduction to Photography*)
- Advanced Digital Photography (*prerequisite: Introduction to Photography*)

#### Digital Art

- Graphic Design I
- Graphic Design II (*prerequisite: Graphic Design I*)
- Web Page Design I
- Web Page Design II (*prerequisite: Web Page Design I*)
- Animation I
- Animation II (*prerequisite: Animation I*)

- 3D Graphics I: Modeling and Animation
- 3D Graphics II: Animation and Video Games (*prerequisite 3D Graphics I*)
- Advanced Animation and Game Design (*prerequisite: Animation II or 3D Graphics II*)

#### **Other Visual Arts Courses**

- Sculpture
- Art History: From Impressionism to Today
- Advanced Projects in Visual Arts (*prerequisite: at least three visual arts courses*)
- Studio Assistant (*with faculty recommendation*)

#### **For further information, please contact:**

- Leo Muellner, Director of Visual Arts, K–12  
(978) 264-4700, x3671; [lmuellner@abschools.org](mailto:lmuellner@abschools.org)

### **HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Our vision in the Acton-Boxborough schools is that all students will understand, appreciate, and engage in a healthy and active lifestyle.

Our mission is to provide a progressive and comprehensive Health and Physical Education program through high-quality, research-based instruction. Students will develop skills and knowledge through a wide variety of learning experiences in a safe environment. Students will also learn how and why they should keep themselves healthy and physically active throughout their lifetimes. Instruction will emphasize physical fitness and skill application, critical thinking and decision-making, sportsmanship, and cooperation.

#### **At R. J. Grey**

All 7th- and 8th-grade students are required to take health and physical education. Students attend as a team that is divided into fifths. Three-fifths attend physical education, while two-fifths attend health; this schedule rotates five times throughout the year. During both the health rotation and the physical education rotation, students follow the curriculum articulated on the R. J. Grey website.

#### **At A.B.R.H.S**

##### **Grade 9**

All grade 9 students follow the Fitness for Living course, which consists of:

- 1<sup>st</sup> quarter in the fitness center.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter lower gym, fitness circuits, cooperative games, and other group games.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter health topics.
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter swimming.

**Grades 10, 11, and 12**

- All grade 10, 11, and 12 students are required to take one semester, i.e. two quarters, of physical education – the equivalent of half a year.
- At the beginning of each quarter, students choose a Physical Education activity from those offered during their class time. Seniors have the first choice of activity, then juniors and then sophomores. Students who are absent on sign-up day may be assigned to an activity based on space availability.
- Choices are, but not limited to:
  - ~ Team games: softball, speedball, tennis, ultimate Frisbee, soccer, disc golf, speedminton, volleyball, flag football, floor hockey.
  - ~ Fitness activities: Fitness center, water aerobics, aerobics, step aerobics, yoga, pilates, resistance band training, body bar strength training.
  - ~ Cooperative games, archery, snowshoeing, mountain biking, and other lifetime outdoor pursuits.

**For further information, please contact:**

- David James, Director of Health and Physical Education, K-12  
(978) 264-4700, x3482; [djames@abschools.org](mailto:djames@abschools.org)

## **ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS**

### **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, employment policies, and other administered programs and activities. In addition, students who are homeless or of limited English-speaking ability are protected from discrimination in accessing the course of study and other opportunities available through the schools.

Any person having inquiries or complaints concerning the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District's compliance with Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA or MGL ch. 76, sec.5 is directed to contact the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Administration Building, 15 Charter Road, Acton, MA, telephone number 978- 264-4700, x3265, who has been designated by the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with these laws, or write to:

Office for Civil Rights

J. F. Kennedy Federal Building, Room 1875

Boston, MA 02203

or

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office of Program Quality Assurance Services

75 Pleasant Street

Malden, MA 02148