River Dell Middle School

Program of Studies

2026 - 2027

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Robert Urbanovich

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

River Dell Middle School strives to provide every learner with a combination of critical thinking skills and resilience that produce 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 through participation in the full school experience, broadening the horizon beyond what was possible in elementary school. We are committed to maximizing the potential of each student by inspiring, encouraging effort, and developing the ability to persevere in the face of adversity.

You are invited and encouraged to preview our school by visiting the RDMS website at Home | River Dell Middle School. There is something for everyone to participate in and to enjoy here at River Dell Middle School, including extracurricular clubs, sports, and intramurals, so reach out and explore all that is available to our students!

River Dell has a wonderful year planned, filled with exciting events and experiences, and we are excited for our students to begin exploring all of it. Please use this resource to help discover more about RDMS and how it can help with the successful pursuit towards educational adulthood.

River Dell Golden Hawks

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

HEALTH FORMS FOR REGISTRATION

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

7TH GRADE STUDENTS

I. **REQUIRED (whether or not they will participate in a sport)**:
- An *original* physical dated between 9/1/2025 and 9/1/2026 will be accepted.
- Current list of immunizations.
- Participation Physical Evaluation Medical Eligibility Form.

II. **Please Note:** If the 7th grade student will be participating in a middle school sport, the *Participation Physical Evaluation Medical Eligibility Form* will be sent to the Athletics Department.

8TH GRADE STUDENTS

The *Participation Physical Evaluation Medical Eligibility Form* is **REQUIRED** to participate in an interscholastic sport and/or intramurals in 8th grade.

ATHLETIC FORMS

All 7th and 8th grade students must submit their *Participation Physical Evaluation Medical Eligibility Form,* which must be received in the Athletics Office prior to September 1st in order to be cleared for fall sports. ***If this form is submitted with the 7th grade registration packet, it will be sent to the Athletics Department.*** If you have not already submitted the form to our MS nurse, Mrs. Comer, please mail the completed form before the end of August to:

River Dell High School
Attn: Mr. Mike Tota
Athletics Department
55 Pyle Street
Oradell, NJ 07649

Full details may be found on our website:

https://rdms.riverdell.org/o/rdhs/page/athletics-pre-participationmedical-forms

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – Cont'd.

COMMUNITYPASS

The River Dell Regional School District is pleased to offer our school community a convenient way in which to complete district forms and pay fees.

1. A CommunityPass account will be created for you, and you will use this same account for each year your student(s) are enrolled in the River Dell Regional School District. *If you are presently a RD family, your MS student will be added to your existing account.*
   - An email from info@communitypass.net will be sent to you once you are registered.
   - The email will contain your username, a temporary password, and CommunityPass link.
   - ***NOTE: Incoming 7th grade families from Cherry Hill, Roosevelt, and OPS will receive this email in mid-July.***
2. Once you log into the account, you will be able to complete the forms and pay the appropriate fees.
   - **NEW STUDENTS** must pay fee and acknowledge forms *before* receiving laptop.
   - **RETURNING STUDENTS** must pay fee and acknowledge forms *before* school begins.
   - **MANDATORY—Laptop Insurance Fee**: $75 per school year.
   - **MANDATORY—School Forms:** Must be acknowledged yearly.
   - **OPTIONAL Activity Fee** for participation in clubs/sports—$50 per school year. (Students may participate in an unlimited number of sports/clubs.)

GENESIS PARENT PORTAL

The **Genesis Parent Portal** offers you personalized access to our student information system where you will monitor your student's attendance, notify our school Attendance Office regarding your student's absence, and view class schedule, grades, report cards, progress reports, and any discipline issues that may arise. The Guardian 1 parent will be registered with the email address provided during the registration process. *If you are presently a RD Family, your middle school student will be added to your existing account.* However, if you are new to the district:

- A Genesis Parent Portal account will be created for you. Incoming 7th grade families from Cherry Hill, Roosevelt, OPS and other students who register during the summer will receive an email in mid-July from GenesisHelp@riverdell.org. The email will contain your username, a temporary password, and the Genesis Parent Portal Link.
- For students who register during the school year, you will receive this email once registration has been completed.

A **Genesis Student Portal** account will be created in addition to Parent accounts. This permits individual student access and prevents siblings from viewing one another's information. Parents are encouraged to keep their account information secure and not to share it with their students. To help students maintain focus during school hours and support their mental health, River Dell Middle School disables access to the Genesis Portal Gradebook tab during the school day from 8:00 a.m. to 2:35 p.m.

Additional information may be obtained from your student's School Counselor.

RIVER DELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

James Albro ….……Superintendent of Schools
Vito DeLaura, Jr.. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Instruction and Technology Education
Trude Engle ……Business Administrator/Board Secretary

BUILDING ADMINISTRATION

Robert Urbanovich ……...Principal
John Jasinski …….Assistant Principal

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Jennifer Ali……...Supervisor of Mathematics
James Cooney…….Director of Special Services
Erin Kirkby ……..……..……..……....Director of Student Personnel Services
Mike Tota……..Director of Athletics, Supervisor of Health and Physical Education
Lisa Torres ..……..Supervisor of English and Social Studies
Marc Wachter …….Chief Information, Technology and Infrastructure Officer

SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Raffaela Bartels ……..……Therapeutic School Counselor
Demetra Binder ……..School Counselor
Derek Giorgio.…….Student Assistance Counselor
Marnie Ross..…….School Counselor

SPECIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Christina Brissette ……Speech Pathologist
Mara Campbell ……...School Psychologist
Grace Marie Cardella ……..Learning Disability Teacher-Consultant
Alison Donoghue …….School Social Worker
Pamela Kosten ……Learning Disability Teacher-Consultant
Denice Trocolar ……..School Psychologist

BOARD OF EDUCATION 2025—2026

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CLASS ADVISORS

The Grade 7 Class Advisor organizes and facilitates certain field trips and events such as the 7th Grade Field Day and 7th Grade Pool Party. During the course of the year, this group will be working closely with the Student Government Organization on school programs and with the Ambassador Program to help develop character and leadership skills in the 7th grade.

The Grade 8 Class Advisor will create an opportunity for students to become more engaged in the middle school experience by having additional activities that interest students and enhance social connections. The Advisor will plan the 8th Grade Picnic at Spring Lake Day Camp and the 8th Grade Semi-Formal at venues such as Biagio's. The Advisor will assist with enhancing other activities during events such as Wellness Day or Hawk Day.

- Dr. Joseph Stingo, 7th Grade Class Advisor
- Mr. Anthony Manderano, 8th Grade Class Advisor

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 student's counselor:

- Mrs. Demetra Binder, Counselor for the Class of 2032, 201-599-7256
- Ms. Marnie Ross, Counselor for the Class of 2031, 201-599-7254

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:

- Ms. Jeanine Farfalla, (last name beginning A—De), 201-599-7298
- Mr. Brian DiUbaldo, (last name beginning Di—Kh), 201-599-7226
- Mrs. Lauren Garcia, (last name beginning Ki—Ma), 201-599-7230
- Mrs. Rachael Anderson, (last name beginning Mc—San), 201-599-7224
- Mrs. Jaclyn Amadeo, (last name beginning Sap—Z), 201-599-7289

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River Dell Middle School
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
2026 – 2027

LANGUAGE ARTS

ENGLISH CLASSES MEET EVERY DAY AND TWICE EVERY FOUR DAYS.

ENGLISH 7

This course provides students with a framework to meet the New Jersey State Learning 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 New Jersey State Learning 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.

MATHEMATICS

MATH CLASSES MEET EVERY DAY AND TWICE EVERY FOUR DAYS.

MATH 7

Math 7 is the grade-level math course. This course 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. Students in this course will take the NJSLA-A Math 7 test.

PREALGEBRA 7

PreAlgebra 7 is an accelerated math course, which combines 7th grade and 8th grade math standards, leading to Algebra 1 in 8th grade. The course uses skills from K-6 mathematics to represent data through algebraic expressions and equations. Students will extend their understanding of operations with fractions and decimals by simplifying expressions and solving equations that involve rational numbers. Students will analyze proportional relationships and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems. They will learn about linear relationships by examining tables, graphs, and equations of lines. Students will use properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions. 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. Students in this course will take the NJSLA-A Math 7 test.

PREALGEBRA 8

PreAlgebra 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, volume of solids, and identifying and using the Pythagorean Theorem. This course leads to Algebra 1 in 9th grade. Students in this course will take the NJSLA-A Math 8 test.

MATHEMATICS – Cont'd.

ADVANCED PREALGEBRA 8

The Advanced PreAlgebra 8 course has the same curriculum as the PreAlgebra 8 course; however, **the depth of understanding and level of expectation are more advanced**. PreAlgebra 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, volume of solids, and identifying and using the Pythagorean Theorem. This course leads to Advanced Algebra 1 in 9th grade. Students in this course will take the NJSLA-A Math 8 test.

ACCELERATED ALGEBRA 1

PreRequisite Course: PreAlgebra 7

Accelerated Algebra 1 is designed for the exceptional student who has demonstrated consistent success and an innate ability in mathematics. Students will define, evaluate, and understand the behavior of functions, including linear functions. Students will recognize and use linear models in real-life applications. They will learn different methods to solve a system of two linear equations and solve real-world problems using these methods. Students will study quadratic functions in multiple ways, both solving and graphing quadratic equations. Quadratic models will be used to solve real-world applications. Students will examine exponential relationships and functions and use them to model real-life situations. Finally, students will use geometry and statistics to explore real-world applications. Students in this course will take the NJSLA-A Algebra 1 test.

HONORS ALGEBRA 1

PreRequisite Course: PreAlgebra 7

Honors Algebra 1 is designed for the exceptional student who has demonstrated consistent success and an innate ability in mathematics. The course is very rigorous and application problems are complex. Students will define, evaluate, and understand the behavior of functions, including linear functions. Students will recognize and use linear models in real-life applications. They will learn different methods to solve a system of two linear equations; and solve real-world problems using these methods. Students will study quadratic functions in multiple ways, both solving and graphing quadratic equations. Quadratic models will be used to solve real-world applications. Students will examine exponential relationships and functions and use them to model real-life situations. Finally, students will use geometry and statistics to explore real-world applications. Students in this course will take the NJSLA-A Algebra 1 test.

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.

	HONORS PATH	ACCELERATED PATH	ADVANCED PATH	COLLEGE PREP PATH	ADVANCED PATH W/ DOUBLE IN 9TH	ADVANCED PATH W/ DOUBLE IN 10TH
7th Grade	PreAlgebra 7	PreAlgebra 7	Math 7	Math 7	Math 7	Math 7
8th Grade	Honors Algebra 1	Accelerated Algebra 1	Advanced PreAlgebra 8	PreAlgebra 8	Advanced PreAlgebra 8	Advanced PreAlgebra 8
9th Grade	Honors Geometry	Advanced Geometry	Advanced Algebra 1	Algebra 1	Advanced Algebra 1 & Advanced Geometry	Advanced Algebra 1
10th Grade	Honors Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry	Advanced Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry	Advanced Geometry	Geometry	Advanced Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry	Advanced Geometry & Advanced Algebra 2 w/ Trignometry
11th Grade	AP PreCalculus AB or AP PreCalculus BC	PreCalculus	Advanced Algebra 2 w/ Trigonometry	Algebra 2	PreCalculus	PreCalculus
12th Grade	AP Calculus AB or AP Calculus BC	Honors Calculus	PreCalculus or Statistics	Algebra 3 or Finite Math	Honors Calculus	Honors Calculus

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

WORLD CIVILIZATIONS 7

World Civilizations is a full-year, chrono-thematic study of the development of Western and non-Western civilizations from approximately 5000 B.C.E. to 1400 C.E. The course examines the major themes, movements, and events, as well as individuals who have shaped modern global society and values from the Neolithic Revolution through the Columbian Exchange. Students examine the evolution of both Western and non-Western cultures and beliefs which have shaped the history of society. Students will develop an increased depth of understanding of the development of global society throughout history. The goal is to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed to become active, informed citizens and contributing members of local, state, national, and global communities in the digital age.

WORLD CIVILIZATIONS 8

World Civilizations is a full-year, chrono-thematic study of the development of Western and non-Western civilizations from approximately 600 B.C.E. to 1914 C.E. The course examines the major themes, movements, and events, as well as individuals who have shaped modern global society and values from the Roman Empire through the Modern Era. Students examine the evolution of both Western and non-Western cultures and beliefs which have shaped the history of society. Students will develop an increased depth of understanding of the development of global society throughout history. The goal is to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed to become active, informed citizens and contributing members of local, state, national, and global communities in the digital age.

WORLD LANGUAGE

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 and winter sports), health (food and good nutrition), cultural activities (art, music, theatre, movies), transportation (train and 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.

SPANISH 7/8

Students will embark on an exciting journey into the diverse and vibrant world of Spanish-speaking nations. Through research, exploration, and engaging hands-on activities, they will gain a deeper understanding of the cultures, traditions, and customs that define Spanish-speaking countries worldwide. Along the way, they will discover regional foods, lively celebrations, and the unique characteristics that make each area special. Students will also build their Spanish vocabulary through conversational lessons, interactive games, and other immersive activities.

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 ARTS CLASSES

MUSIC STUDIO 7 — *Trimester Class*

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.

THEATER ARTS 7 — *Trimester Class*

The goal of this course is to help students generate an appreciation for theater arts and dance. Learning Theater Arts and Dance offers students a unique opportunity to develop critical academic skills in research, writing, movement, and public speaking while exploring themselves and the world in which they live. Core academic skill-building occurs in an active, creative, and fun learning environment.

ART OF THE 20TH CENTURY 8 — *Trimester Class*

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 8 — *Trimester Class*

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.

CYCLE ARTS CLASSES – Cont'd.

RD101 7 – *Half Year Class Rotating w/ English and Math*

The purpose of RD101 7 is to help students transition from elementary school to middle school. To this end, RD101 7 combines the exploration of a student's digital footprint with the skills needed to build healthy relationships and to become a model citizen. This course will enable students to showcase their learning through multiple learning modalities that support the development of strategies to enhance their learning and behavior to reach their goals.

RESEARCH-DESIGN-CREATE 8 – *Half Year Class Rotating w/ English and Math*

The goal of RDC 8 is to help students fully engage with the diverse resources and opportunities available in the middle school media center. Throughout the course, students will explore a wide range of topics, including research skills, online database navigation, the design process, digital citizenship, and artificial intelligence. These experiences will allow students to foster their curiosity, conduct research on topics that interest them, and showcase their creativity in various forms.

STEM

STEM

STEM Computers 7 and STEM Engineering 8 focus on a deep understanding of concepts that enable students to think critically and systematically about leveraging technology to solve local and global issues. Authentic learning experiences that enable students to apply content knowledge, integrate concepts across disciplines, develop computational thinking skills, acquire and incorporate varied perspectives, and communicate with diverse audiences about the use and effects of computing to prepare New Jersey students for college and careers.

The following courses will be part of the trimester schedule for students in both 7th and 8th grades.

STEM Computers 7 — *Trimester Class*

This course will have a focus on computer science/programming skills, which will cover the following topics: data and analysis, algorithms and programming, and computing systems.

STEM Engineering 8 — *Trimester Class*

This course will have a focus on the skills and concepts of technology design thinking, which include technological and engineering literacy. Among the disciplinary concepts, the new framework design includes engineering design, ethics and culture, and the effects of technology on the natural world.

PERFORMING ARTS

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.

CHORUS 7 AND 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.

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

Over the past few seasons, the River Dell Marching Band has shown significant growth in membership numbers. The River Dell Marching Band will include students in grades 8—12. Incoming 7th grade students interested in joining the RDMB are encouraged to focus on growing their musical skills in 7th grade band with Mr. Kennedy before registering for Marching Band in the spring.

This course is designed to give the learner a comprehensive experience in musical/visual performance through the centuries-old tradition known as Marching Arts. 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. After their mandatory band camp in August, the RDMB performs at high school football games, festivals/competitions, local holiday ceremonies and at various other programs throughout the school year while also receiving academic credit. **Rehearsals are on Monday and Thursday nights at the RDHS band room from 7-9 p.m. during September—November. For more information, please contact Mr. Vitetta at Justin.Vitetta@riverdell.org.**

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) 7 AND 8

This course prepares Multilingual Students (MLs) to participate successfully in our English speaking classrooms and for life in the United States. We strive to provide our MLs 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 2.0 state test, reading and writing assessments, and teacher recommendations, the student is transitioned into the regular schedule with minimal support.

A, B, C and 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 and D DAY
SAMPLE CALENDAR

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

SCHOOL COUNSELING FAST FAQS

READING YOUR SCHEDULE

How do ABCD Days work?

Some of our classes (double Math day, double English day, RD 101, Research-Design-Create 8, Chorus and Band) run on an ABCD rotation. A rotation is four days long and continues throughout the school year. ABCD days are announced on morning announcements.

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 available in July, 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 School Counselor?

Mrs. Binder is the School Counselor for the Class of 2032 and Ms. Ross will be the School Counselor for the Class of 2031. Your School Counselor will be assigned to you 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. We recommend writing it down in a calendar or planner. In addition, each teacher's Week-At-A-Glance (accessed from your OneNote tabs on your laptop), will include important information for class, such as homework and upcoming projects as well as information about assessments. Please be sure to check each of your teachers' websites every night!

SCHOOL COUNSELING FAST FAQS – Cont'd.

When are teachers available for extra help?

Teachers are generally available after school for extra help on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you have a question about an assignment or assessment, simply ask your teachers for help! Be sure to check with your teachers regarding their availability. This information can also be found on their River Dell website.

How can my parents speak with one of my teachers?

Every teacher can be reached directly by e-mail. Parents can send an email to a teacher via the Staff Directory on the River Dell website. If you need assistance getting in touch with a teacher, contact your School Counselor.

HOUSEKEEPING QUESTIONS

What is OneNote?

OneNote is an interactive and collaborative online notebook, part of the Microsoft Office Suite. OneNote acts as a student's digital backpack, offering access to classroom materials and resources anytime, anywhere. Parents can stay on top of homework and deadlines with teachers' Week-at-a-Glance pages, all within OneNote.

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 student's attendance and grades so that they can stay informed. Progress Reports, Report Cards, and certificates for Principal's List and Honor Roll 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. Student laptops will not be distributed until forms and fees have been completed.

SCHOOL COUNSELING FAST FAQS – Cont'd.

What if my contact information changes during the year?

Email Registrar@riverdell.org with changes pertaining to address, phone number, email, contacts, etc., so we can keep your information 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?

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, Press Option #2 and then Option #1, 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. NOTE: Day of absence must be reported by 9:00 a.m. Future dates may be reported at any time.*

Doctor's Note and Nurse's Office: A student who has been absent due to a communicable disease or suspicion of one may be asked to provide written confirmation from a healthcare provider to the school nurse, verifying that they are no longer contagious. The school nurse, Mrs. Kristen Comer, may be reached via email at Kristen.Comer@riverdell.org or by calling 201-599-7280.

Absences: Please review River Dell School District Policy 5200 which outlines the guidelines for student attendance, including the criteria for excused and unexcused absences. If a student returns after being absent for three consecutive school days, they may be required to submit a written statement that is dated, signed by either the parent or doctor, and explains the reason for the absence.

Health Services: Parents are encouraged to visit the Health Services tab on the school website for information on medications and health-related services.

Teachers' Websites: Students are encouraged to visit their teachers' websites to review and catch up on any missed work during their absence.

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

1. *Contact the Attendance office (preferably before 7:30 a.m.) by calling 201-599-7200, Press Option #2 and then Option #1, or*
2. *On the Genesis Parent Portal, click ATTENDANCE, then click NOTIFY ATTENDANCE OFFICE and fill out the required information.*
3. *Upon arrival to school, you must sign in at the Main office and obtain a late pass for class.*

SCHOOL COUNSELING FAST FAQS – Cont'd.

What do I do if I have to leave early?

A parent/guardian must notify the Attendance Office in advance by using any of the following methods:

1. *Contact the Attendance office (preferably before 7:30 a.m.) by calling 201-599-7200, Press Option #2 and then Option #1, or*
2. *On the Genesis Parent Portal, click ATTENDANCE, then click NOTIFY ATTENDANCE OFFICE and fill out the required information.*
3. *Parent/Guardian must write a note that should be given to the Main Office upon the student's arrival at school indicating pick up time and name of the person who will be picking up the student.*

MATH PLACEMENT

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

If student scored Level 5 on the NJSLA Math 5 and has a teacher recommendation for the course, the student is placed in PreAlgebra 7. If not Level 5, students who satisfy both criteria below are placed in PreAlgebra 7; otherwise, students are placed in Math 7.

- 6th Grade Math Class Test Average $\geq$ 93%
- Linkit Form B Test Score $\geq$ 85%

My student 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 <85%, then the student is placed in PreAlgebra 8.
- If the student is currently in Math 7 and has an assessment average of >85%, the student is placed in Advanced PreAlgebra 8.
- If a student is currently in PreAlgebra 7 and has an assessment average of <80%, the student is placed in Advanced PreAlgebra 8.
- If a student is currently in PreAlgebra 7 and has an assessment average between 80% and 89%, the student is placed in Accelerated Algebra 1.
- If a student is currently in PreAlgebra 7 and has an assessment average of >90%, the student is placed in Honors Algebra 1.

SCHOOL COUNSELING FAST FAQS—Cont'd.

My student is in Accelerated Algebra 1 or Honors Algebra 1 in 8th grade. Does he/she take the 8th grade NJSLA-A Math 8 test or the NJSLA-A Algebra 1 test?

- Students enrolled in Accelerated Algebra 1 or Honors Algebra 1 only take *one* NJSLA-A Math Test—the Algebra 1 NJSLA-A test.

How does a *teacher recommendation* impact my student'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 90 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 12 for an overview of the most frequently taken paths in Math for grades 7 through 12.

SCHOOL COUNSELING 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 SCHOOL COUNSELING 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.

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.

ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER CLUB

To unite students with ethnically diverse backgrounds. This Club will create a greater understanding of the unique aspects of Asian American and Pacific Islander cultures. Members will participate in group discussions, spread awareness through various activities, and will seek to create unity in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community at River Dell.

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.

BOARD GAMING CLUB

This Club offers students a chance to unplug and interact face to face. Students will meet once a week to learn and play board games. There will be classics like Monopoly and Connect 4, but the main goal of the club will be exposing them to newer games that focus on cooperative play, deduction, dexterity skills and decision-making skills.

BUSINESS CLUB

The objective of this club will be to prepare students for careers in business and entrepreneurship by learning basic business fundamentals. The aim is also to generate interest in taking business classes at the high school level and to provide students with a direct pathway to joining River Dell High School's Distributive Education Club of America (DECA) Chapter. Our advisor and club members will network with the local businesses in both Oradell and River Edge to provide community service and other learning opportunities. The club's vision is to create a school store where students can learn skills in entrepreneurship, accounting, management, and organization.

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 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.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont'd.

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 Nutritional Living and Wellness class.

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.

INTERACT CLUB

To raise awareness and serve the needs of our community for various causes.
The middle school Interact Club will act as a feeder program and collaborate with our high school Interact Club. The Club will partner with Midnight Run, Several Sources Shelters, Eva's Village, Oasis Women's Center, and other local food pantries.

INTRODUCTION TO ITALIAN CLUB

Introduction to Italian Club will introduce students to both language and the culture of Italy. Students will learn basic Italian conversation including introductions, travel, and restaurant vocabulary. The club will meet twice a month, with a lesson the first meeting and an activity the second meeting of the month. The different regions of Italy will be discussed in relation to the art, history, famous sites, music, food and why they differ so vastly from region to region. Some of the activities may include virtual trips, creating famous buildings out of pasta shapes, pasta making and Italian-themed bake sales. Students will also have the opportunity to suggest other related language and cultural activities.

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

Students create RDMS's award-winning magazine, which is filled with literature, artwork, poetry, and photography that reflects the students' world in which they live. The literary magazine is distributed to faculty and to students.

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 a 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.

MATH MASTERS CLUB

This club offers middle school students a supportive space to complete math homework, receive extra instruction, and strengthen problem-solving skills. Supervised by a qualified math teacher and supported by high school Math Honor Society student tutors, the club fosters confidence, reinforces key concepts, and encourages collaborative learning and critical thinking. Mathematics can be a challenging subject for many middle school students, and having a structured support system can make a significant difference in their confidence and performance.

NATIONAL JUNIOR ART HONOR SOCIETY

The National Junior Art Honor Society, (NJAHS), 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.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont'd.

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!

7TH GRADE ROBOTICS CLUB

The club is designed to allow students to explore the world of Robots using the Lego Mindstorms platform. Attendance is not mandatory, and students may alternate weeks with other clubs.

8TH GRADE ROBOTICS CLUB

The club is designed to allow students to explore the world of Robots using the Lego Mindstorms platform. Attendance is not mandatory, and students may alternate weeks with other clubs.

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 CHOIR

The Select Choir 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 and 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).

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – Cont'd.

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

S*tudents 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 and Girls Cross Country (fall season), Boys and Girls Basketball (winter season), and Boys and 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.

STAGE CREW

Stage Crew 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 Stage Crew will be responsible for participation in the RDMS Winter and Spring concerts.

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.

STRENGTH/CONDITIONING HEALTH CLUB

The Strength/Conditioning Health Club will include a variety of activities that are designed to help students develop the knowledge and skills to be healthy and active for a lifetime. RDMS SCC will guide students in learning about health and wellness, and how to improve their own well-being. Whether it's some time spent lifting in our middle school weight room or learning how to make healthy snacks to fuel your workouts, we hope to see you at our meetings and events. ***Students are required to have a physical on file with the Nurse in order to participate in the Strength/Conditioning Health Club.***

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.

RDMS TV/Media Club

Students will explore basic camera composition and editing skills while developing an interest in media production. They will create videos for middle school projects, assist RDHS Media Club members in filming school events, and record content for high school productions like *The RunDown* newscast. This club offers early exposure to TV/Media Production, helping students build skills before entering RDHS.

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.