



# MEDFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

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## High School Placement Information

2024

During the months of January and February, we begin to discuss student placement in high school courses. Please find information below from each department regarding course placement.

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### ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

*Bethan Sancher, 6-12 English Department Chair*

[bsancher@email.medfield.net](mailto:bsancher@email.medfield.net)

When students transition into high school, classes are leveled: Honors and College Prep (CP). Our department's goal is to find the level of challenge that is appropriate for each student. We examine the level where each student can increase their writing, thinking, and reading skills best. All courses follow the same curricula and target the same exit skills, yet the pacing, delivery methods, level of independence, type of homework, and assessments vary among levels.

Recognizing that the level and pace of instruction are important to academic success, we work hard to make placement decisions that will provide your child with academic challenges and pacing that are appropriate and not overwhelming. A great deal of collaborative and thoughtful review goes into making appropriate Grade 9 English recommendations.

Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to your child's English teacher.

- Ian Gagne - [igagne@email.medfield.net](mailto:igagne@email.medfield.net)
- Kara Gelormini - [kgelormini@email.medfield.net](mailto:kgelormini@email.medfield.net)
- Ann Fratolillo - [afratolillo@email.medfield.net](mailto:afratolillo@email.medfield.net)

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### MATH DEPARTMENT

*Jessica Safer, 6-12 Math Department Chair*

[jsafer@email.medfield.net](mailto:jsafer@email.medfield.net)

Students in 8th grade are currently enrolled in Math8 or Algebra 1 Accelerated. Soon, math teachers will recommend a grade 9 math course for each student. There are 3 possibilities: Algebra 1 College Level 2, Algebra 1 College Level 1, and Geometry Honors.

Algebra 1 is a foundational course for all higher-level math courses. A strong background in the algebraic fundamentals will help students to be successful in all future math courses.

Teachers will recommend students to the course where they feel they will be the most successful. This recommendation will be based on proficiency of grade 8 standards and Algebra 1 standards (if applicable). It will also be based on the demonstration of the learning skills. Grade 8 teachers may also conference with grade 6 and 7 teachers as well.

Please reach out to your student's current math teacher with any questions.

- Erin Kearney -- [ekearney@email.medfield.net](mailto:ekearney@email.medfield.net)
- Susan Bycoff -- [sbycoff@email.medfield.net](mailto:sbycoff@email.medfield.net)
- Mary Ellen DuBois -- [mdubois@email.medfield.net](mailto:mdubois@email.medfield.net)

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## SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

*Orla Berry, 6-12 Science Department Chair*

[oberry@email.medfield.net](mailto:oberry@email.medfield.net)

As part of the placement process, students will take a placement test in their science classes on January 16, 2024. The placement assessment will consist of one question where students will analyze and graph data so they can complete a CER (claim, evidence, reasoning). This is a typical way that students work with data in the science classroom - they use the data to make a claim; they identify the evidence that supports their claim and they reason how the evidence supports their claim.

This assessment is skills-based and one with which students are very familiar. It is not an assessment for which students need to prepare, they simply come to class and complete the CER.

Placement in grade 9 science classes is based on the following criteria:

- Recommendation of 8th-grade science teacher (in collaboration with 6th and 7th-grade science teachers) with an emphasis on learning skills such as - actively participating during class, organizing and completing work in a timely manner, coming to class prepared for learning, explaining their thinking clearly and attending to detail
- Proficiency with Middle school science standards with an emphasis on the understanding and application of abstract science concepts
- Performance in the science placement test

Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to your child's science teacher.

- Jason Heim - [jheim@email.medfield.net](mailto:jheim@email.medfield.net)
- Jillian Shaw - [jshaw@email.medfield.net](mailto:jshaw@email.medfield.net)
- Michael Gibbs - [mgibbs@email.medfield.net](mailto:mgibbs@email.medfield.net)

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## SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

*Kathleen Emerson, 6-12 Social Studies Department Chair*

[kemerson@email.medfield.net](mailto:kemerson@email.medfield.net)

8th graders are fully immersed in learning about civics and the complexities of the US government. They are currently studying the three branches of government and the system of checks and balances. Next year, in 9th grade, all students will take **World History** from the French Revolution to the present day. To correctly place students in the leveled classes - Honors and College Prep (CP), where they will be challenged but not overwhelmed, we consider many factors.

Students will take a placement test the week prior to February vacation to measure their ability to think critically, make connections, and analyze information. These assessments are only part of the picture. In addition, we look at demonstrated learning skills, levels of independence, student interest, and critical thinking skills. Students will also complete a self-reflection about their learning in the class.

The social studies placement process is very fluid at MHS. Students routinely change levels from year to year based on performance. Should you have any questions please contact your child's teacher.

- Gregory Keohan [gkeohan@email.medfield.net](mailto:gkeohan@email.medfield.net)
- John Sullivan [jsullivan@email.medfield.net](mailto:jsullivan@email.medfield.net)
- Travis Taliaferro [ttaliaferro@email.medfield.net](mailto:ttaliaferro@email.medfield.net)

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## WORLD LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

*Ellen Toubman, 6-12 World Language Department Chair*  
[etoubman@email.medfield.net](mailto:etoubman@email.medfield.net)

As students move from our middle school program to our high school program, they should find that their proficiency level in their chosen second language continues to grow. Because our program is based on the ACTFL proficiency levels and individuals acquire proficiency with different rates of speed, we continue to mark our courses with a range of proficiency targets.

It should also be noted that there is no leveling (honors, C1 or C2) in World Language until the twelfth-grade year. Most students coming from the Spanish and French programs at Blake will be prepared to continue their proficiency journey at the Novice-High to Intermediate-Low range (also known as level 2). Those students who enter our program from the Mandarin program at Blake should be prepared to continue their proficiency journey at the Novice-Mid to Novice-High range (also known as level 2). Eighth-grade students at Blake will take the AAPPL assessment toward the end of the year. This assessment may also serve as guidance to ensure proper placement; however, this is not a placement exam per se.

Students may also choose to begin a new language when they enter our high school program. Ninth grade is when our Latin program begins. There might also be other individual reasons why the previously mentioned progression is either not recommended by your child's current teacher or preferred by your students/ families. In these cases, conversions between the current teacher and parents will occur. Please reach out to your child's current language teacher with questions.

- Heather Gonzalez [HGonzalez@email.medfield.net](mailto:HGonzalez@email.medfield.net) (Spanish)
- Kristin Manning [KManning@email.medfield.net](mailto:KManning@email.medfield.net) (Spanish)
- Susie Boulous [SBoulous@email.medfield.net](mailto:SBoulous@email.medfield.net) (Spanish)
- Maura Batts [MBatts@email.medfield.net](mailto:MBatts@email.medfield.net) (Spanish)
- Houda Choukri [hchoukri@email.medfield.net](mailto:hchoukri@email.medfield.net) (French)
- Cindy Yu [cyu@email.medfield.net](mailto:cyu@email.medfield.net) or
- Xuguang Zhang [xzhang@email.medfield.net](mailto:xzhang@email.medfield.net) (Mandarin)

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## TEACHER RECOMMENDATION APPEALS

Only students wishing to appeal the teacher's recommended level of placement will complete the steps below.

Some students, after hearing about their course placement, may decide they want to appeal and move to a level different from what was recommended. To appeal a Grade 8 teacher's placement recommendation, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete all the steps outlined below.

**Step 1:** Have an email or phone conversation with your child's current teacher. This is a required first step. Having this conversation will help you understand the background behind the Grade 9 course recommendation.

**Step 2: Schedule a meeting with the Department Chair**

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) of any students wishing to appeal must email the Department Chair to schedule a meeting.
- The student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Department Chair will all attend this meeting, and the Department Chair will review academic expectations for the higher-level course.
- The last day for an appeal meeting is Thursday, April 11, 2024.

**Step 3: Sign the appeal form.** The student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and Department Chair will all sign the appeal form before April vacation, and this change will be made to the student's schedule for the next school year.