



March 19, 2019

Dear Parents,

As a district, Rumson continually strives to ignite the potential of our learners by creating an environment where each student can meet with academic success. This environment is established both through differentiation in instructional practices and by providing opportunities for various levels of instruction. To that end the staff and administrators have worked together over the past several years to enhance programs and opportunities for acceleration in grades 6 through 8 in the areas of English language arts and math.

During the Spring, many parents have questions regarding student placement for the subsequent school year. District placement rubrics are always available on the Rumson District website under the Curriculum tab. Parents are encouraged to review those rubrics and schedule a conference with staff during parent teacher conferences, which will occur during the first week in April, to discuss their child's performance. **Please follow appropriate grade-specific Genesis conference scheduling instructions as directed in the Gr. 4-8 Spring conference email from Forrestdale.**

#### **Is my child prepared to be successful in an enriched/accelerated course?**

Students in enriched/accelerated courses:

- Demonstrate exemplary work habits and high levels of effort.
- Are highly organized and possess excellent time management skills.
- Are exceptionally self-directed, demonstrate initiative and perseverance.
- Analyze, evaluate and synthesize more complex and in-depth concepts.
- Are expected to complete more independent work at home.
- Will be expected to analyze more difficult texts, often independently.

#### **What courses in grades 6-8 are leveled?**

The district continues to offer accelerated mathematics and enriched English language arts [ELA] courses for the middle school grades. It is important to note that **all** ELA classes follow the same grade-level specific standards; in the enriched ELA classes, however, students will experience increased rigor in these areas:

- the complexity of texts read (higher lexile level)
- increase in volume/complexity of assignments

It is also important to note that while the math course sequence may, in some cases, lead toward advanced course placement at the high school level, the ELA course sequence does not.

#### **How are placements determined?**

Placement is based on student performance using multiple, subject-specific criteria and indicators. While many students participate in the rigorous grade level pathway, for some students accelerated placement is necessary.

A committee composed of administrators and staff reviews, discusses and provides input with each student's placement in ELA and math based on a combination of the criteria/indicators. Please visit the Curriculum page on the district website using this link to [view grade- and subject-specific rubrics](#).

#### **When are placements determined?**

Placement letters are mailed home during the summer. If minimum proficiency is not met for acceleration per the rubric and parents desire further review, parents may elect to have their child participate in one of two Placement Appeal Test sittings during either July or August. Students may sit for only one of the appeal dates.

The district does not hold a vision of tracking students on one course sequence that is initiated by their placement from 5th to 6th grade and followed through to 8th grade. As a result, while initial notification of course placements occur in the summer, it is the district's practice to **review student performance at each grade level each marking period and initiate a discussion with parents of appropriate changes in placement if warranted.**

While the best source of information about your child's performance is the teacher, we are always available to answer any remaining questions you may have.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer Gibbons*

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Forrestdale Principal

*Vera Ridoux*

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District Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment