

Principal's Log 2.37 Student Scheduling

Dear TMS Families:

Last year we implemented a strategic plan for the District. One of the goals included increasing the diversity of students who are afforded the opportunity to participate in advanced courses. This is an important goal that must be undergirded with a review of the curriculum and the implementation of scaffolded support. Professional development will be necessary for this to be successful. In Tuckahoe, we have the opportunity to make this happen. By this, I mean we have strong teachers and the resources necessary to make this shift. Change is always interesting, but our quest is to push forward on a path of continual improvement.

Effective September of the 2020-2021 school year, all 7th grade students will take pre-algebra. All 8th grade students will take Algebra 1. This does not mean that all 8th grade students have to take the Regents exam, but they will have the option. We will provide 1 section of remedial AIS support at both grade levels and 1 section of Algebra support. Teachers will continue to provide extra - help after school. In 8th grade science, we are eliminating the IPS Science 8 course and all students will be enrolled in Regents Earth Science. Once again, taking the Regents exam will be an option for all students. In both cases, if the Regents exam is to be counted as a final exam, students who do not take it will have to take a local cumulative assessment.

Even though our teachers have done an amazing job in the Covid-19 imposed digital learning environment, the disruption of the educational process makes this change even more necessary next year. Although the teaching and learning remained strong, the curriculum became fragmented and assessment of learning was undermined. As we make this change, we are enriching our middle school with more opportunity for all students to advance in math and science and helping the students who were negatively impacted by the forced closing of school.

Concurrently, this comes at a time when the District is focusing on the social and emotional (SEL) needs of students. This model eliminates the sorting and labeling of students which causes unnecessary strife. All staff have received preliminary training in SEL that will continue next year. As this new model takes root, teachers will have the opportunity to put their training to work in these courses using the new tools at their disposal.

Lastly, addressing real and perceived issues of inequity in Tuckahoe positions us firmly as leaders in the area of responding to data from our NYS report card. This can only help our overall ratings and add value to the community. It is my firm belief as a 20 year educator that students rise to the standards we set for them. Under this model, we progressively challenge all of our students to aspire to be the best math and science students that they can be while providing them the support they need to succeed.

Sincerely,
Greg Stiefel

Be sure to check out our website for PTA flyers, calendar snapshots, and other reminders.
http://tms.tuckahoeschools.org/201718_weekly_eneewsletter

