

Alton U. Farnsworth Middle School

Guilderland Central School District

6072 State Farm Road, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084 (518) 456-6010 FAX (518) 456-3747

www.guilderlandschools.org

MARIE WILES, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

WILLIAM A AUBE
House Principal

MARY K. SUMMMERMATTER
Building Principal

MICHAEL J. PIPA
House Principal

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AMY L. TUBBS
House Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians of 7th Grade Students:

At Farnsworth Middle School, we seek to identify each student's unique talents. Students who have demonstrated exceptional abilities are provided with opportunities to move beyond the core curriculum through enrichment and acceleration. Enrichment provides each student opportunities to expand their knowledge and create new experiences. Acceleration provides students with an opportunity to participate in curriculum at a faster pace than their peers.

Guilderland Central School District, through its Middle School program, has proudly provided its 8th graders with an opportunity for acceleration in both Math and Science. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about these opportunities and the criteria that is used to determine if your student is ready to participate in the high school level courses in Integrated Algebra and Regents Living Environment (Biology) as an 8th grader next year.

Acceleration: Regents Integrated Algebra:

Integrated Algebra is the first course in a Regents sequence which culminates with the New York State Regents Exam in June. Students will be expected to acquire and demonstrate mathematical problem solving skills and will be expected to identify and justify mathematical relationships. Topics will include equation solving, graphing, systems of equations, rational expressions, probability, and statistics. Students are selected to participate in Accelerated Math based on a number of criteria:

- The 7th grade Skills Test in Math –taken in March of this school year.
- Midterm Exam
- Quarterly Grades (for the first three quarters)
- Math Teacher Recommendation

The selected students will take Integrated Algebra and do NOT participate in 8th grade Math. To support all participating students as they transition from 7th grade Math to the Integrated Algebra course, a prerequisite, summer bridge program has been developed. The 7th grade Math program also provides opportunities for students to become exposed to some 8th grade Math topic areas and has, inherent to its curriculum, avenues for enrichment.

Acceleration: Regents Living Environment:

Students are selected for Regents Living Environment only if they have qualified for Integrated Algebra. Student selection for Accelerated Science is also based on:

- Quarterly grades in Science for the first three quarters of their 7th grade year.
- A demonstration of a high level of proficiency in their lab work,
- Science Teacher recommendation

The Living Environment classes will be offered as part of the regular school day. Participating students in this newly created Accelerated Science program will NOT participate in 8th grade Science.

The opportunity for acceleration is a tremendous one. It is an opportunity for students to take high school level courses as an 8th grader and is a serious endeavor for our students, families, and our faculty. These experiences have a profound affect on our students' educational career and their high school transcripts. Students who participate in Regents Integrated Algebra and Regents Living Environment during their 8th grade year are expected to complete five years of Math and Science prior to high school graduation.

Every year we offer this program, the staff at Farnsworth Middle School is overwhelmed by the talent pool. Please encourage your child to continue to work hard and do their best. If your student qualifies for the acceleration program, you will be notified by letter in early May.

Regards,



Ms. Beverly Cotten
Instructional Administrator for Math, Science and Technology