

# Concord Middle School

## Educational Program

Approved by the School Committee

January 26, 2021



Educational Program

CONCORD MIDDLE SCHOOL  
835/1231 Old Marlboro Road  
Concord, MA

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# Acknowledgements

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# Executive Summary

Concord Middle School currently serves students in grades 6, 7, and 8 located in two schools with grade six located in one building and grades seven and eight another. Despite the vintage of the schools and their original purposes as an elementary school and junior high school, Concord Middle School provides deep, rich, and robust curriculum offerings focused on meeting the individual needs of students and integrating a range of opportunities both during and outside of the school day.

A new Concord Middle School where all three grades coexist in one building will allow for the vision of teams of core content teachers to share the instruction for a group of students, enhancing social relationships as well as interdisciplinary and cooperative learning. The modified teams that are assigned to mixed grades and spread throughout expansive buildings will, in a new school, have pods within the school where core classrooms and a shared common space invite team and grade-level experiences and connections.

A commitment to intervention and enrichment is also integral to the philosophy of Concord Middle School resulting in students receiving targeted both instruction and a range of choices for enrichment. This Response to Intervention and Response to Enrichment model provides benefits to academics, emotional well-being, and engagement. Similarly, all students participate in the fine and performing arts programs, world languages, physical education, health and technology courses. The extensive athletic program promotes both skill and enjoyment for all students as do the expansive after school clubs. There is literally an option for everyone.

As the community embarks on the design of a new Concord Middle School it should meet these needs as well as be flexible to meet educational changes of the next 50 years.

# Introduction, Strategic Plan, and Core Values

## Introduction

The Concord Middle School Educational Plan was initiated in the winter of 2019 as part of a time-line to work through the 2019-2020 school year toward completion of Feasibility and Schematic Design of a new Concord Middle School. The process was moving forward in March of 2020 when, as with everything, the design process halted due to the Coronavirus pandemic. During the summer of 2020, some work was furthered on the Education Plan with completion of its first draft in December of 2020. The draft was made available to the project team, School Committee, and Concord School Building Committee for review and input in the first weeks of January 2021. As a result of the pandemic, Concord Middle School operated very differently during the 2020-2021 school year. References to schedules and programs are either anchored in the 2019-2020 school year or projected for future years beginning with the Fall of 2021 and beyond.

## Concord Public Schools Core Values

In 2018, the Concord Public Schools and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District embarked on a strategic planning process. The process resulted in an identified mission, vision and core values as well as four district-wide strategic objectives:

### Multiple Paths to Success

Employ teaching practices that are highly engaging, emphasize innovation, and offer multiple paths to student success.

### Well-Being

Establish and commit to ensuring student achievement through student well-being.

### Inclusive Culture

Create a collaborative and inclusive culture in the schools and community that values diversity and recognizes the contributions and uniqueness of each learner.

### Innovative Environment

Create a physical environment that catalyzes student learning through safe, healthy, and innovative indoor and outdoor spaces.

The objectives are each supported by strategic initiatives which are clearly outlined in the complete document, [Strategic Plan 2018-2023](#). Concord Middle School aligns its plan with this mission, vision and core values to develop a plan appropriate for the vision in grades six through eight.

## Concord Middle School Core Values

All Concord Middle School staff are committed to cultivating a climate that nurtures the following values in our students:

### Community

Compassion and loyalty towards the world outside of the self.

### High Achievement

Confidence and willpower to learn from mistakes, appreciate success, and grow towards one's potential.

### Lifelong Learning

Passion to discover new interests and to uncover the fascinating in the mundane.



## 2019-2020 School Improvement Plan

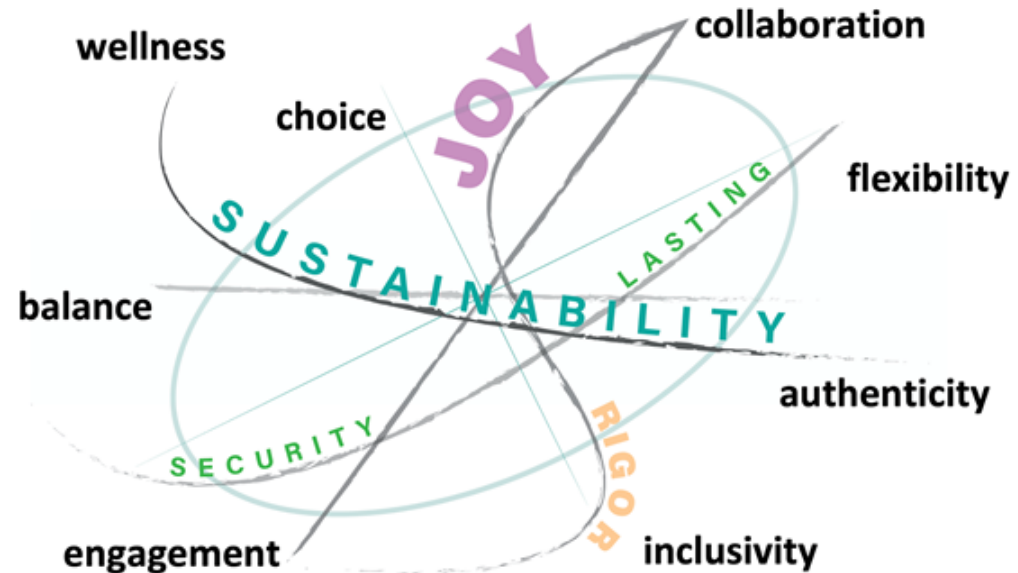
CMS 2019-2020 School Improvement Plan	
Concord Middle School Core Values and Learning Beliefs	
<p>Concord Middle School staff are committed to cultivating a climate that nurtures the following values in our students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community: Compassion and loyalty towards the world outside of the self.</li> <li>• High Achievement: Confidence and willpower to learn from mistakes, appreciate success, and grow towards one's potential.</li> <li>• Lifelong Learning: Passion to discover new interests and to uncover the fascinating in the mundane.</li> </ul>	
Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Vision	
<p>Students of Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools actively seek varied pathways through which they achieve their potential and find joy. They will possess a strong sense of self and embrace their responsibilities as members of both local and global communities.</p>	
Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Vision of Student Learning	
<p>I am a student in Concord Public Schools and Concord Carlisle High School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My safe learning environment is created by respectful relationships with my teachers and my peers.</li> <li>• My teachers are knowledgeable, highly skilled and passionate.</li> <li>• My teachers care about me by affirming me, giving me useful feedback, and working with me individually when I need it.</li> <li>• I am learning important content based on agreed upon standards, clear goals, and real world applications.</li> <li>• My learning experiences are engaging, enjoyable, and challenging.</li> <li>• My learning experiences vary from one another (individual vs. group work; creative vs. repetitive practice; novel vs. known; digital vs. traditional; personal choice vs. consistent topic).</li> <li>• I am learning how to learn by staying organized, breaking down assignments, managing my time, using all available resources, and always giving my best effort.</li> <li>• I take risks, learn from my mistakes, and know every day that I am growing.</li> <li>• When I struggle, I continue to grow and learn.</li> <li>• With hard work, I will be prepared for higher learning, the work world, and knowledgeable citizenship in my community and the wider world.</li> </ul>	
Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Core Values	
<p>The Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> <li>• Inclusion</li> <li>• Innovation</li> </ul>	
Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Theory of Action	
<p>If we... Provide engaging, innovative learning experiences that support multiple paths to success,          Ensure our students' well-being,          Create a collaborative and inclusive culture that values diversity and the uniqueness of each learner, and          Create a physical environment that catalyzes student learning,</p> <p>Then... Our students will achieve their potential and find joy.</p>	

CMS SIP Goals			
Multiple Paths to Success Year Two	Well-Being Year Two	Inclusive Culture Year Two	Innovative Environment Year Two
1. Employ teaching practices that are highly engaging, emphasize innovation, and offer multiple paths to student success.	2. Establish and commit to ensuring student achievement through student well-being.	3. Create a collaborative and inclusive culture in the schools and community that values diversity and recognizes the contributions and uniqueness of each learner.	4. Create a physical environment that catalyzes student learning through safe, healthy, and innovative indoor and outdoor spaces.
CMS SIP Initiatives			
1.1 Support in year two, a middle school RtI/tiered levels of support and data team that would oversee all RtI/tiered levels of support at the middle school.	2.1 Support in year two, a middle school Challenge Success and Mindfulness Steering Committees to create opportunities for students and families at the middle school to learn a variety of coping strategies to develop mindfulness and help redefine success from a whole child perspective.	3.1 Support the work of the CMS Allies group with a focus on cultural proficiency and inclusive practices to meet the individual learning needs of each student.	4.1 Reestablish a middle school Building Reconfigure Steering Committee to reflect on the transition of two 6th / 7th / 8th grade buildings to Sanborn being an all 7th and 8th grade building and Peabody being an all 6th grade building.
1.2 Support in year two, middle school ACCESS (social and emotional program) at both Sanborn (7th /8th Grade) and Peabody (6th Grade) along with in year one, a 6th grade language based program.	2.2 Support in year two, the Rethinking the Middle School 1:1 Committee to examine the role of digital learning for students at a middle school age.	3.2 Support in year two, the Celtics Playbook Initiative, an anti-discrimination and bias-prevention student program.	4.2 Pursue a new middle school building.
1.3 Support in year two, a Student Council with a focus on increasing student voice in the culture and climate of CMS.	2.3 Improve practices to ease the 5th to 6th grade and 8th to 9th grade transitions. Working with CCHS and Carlisle Middle School in the support of the 8th to 9th grade transition.	3.3 Continue to partner with students and families from Boston to increase opportunities for them, as members of the community, to participate in the middle school.	4.3 Increase and leverage the use of the physical environment and outdoor space in instructional experiences at the middle school. This includes support of the new outdoor classroom at Sanborn.

# VISIONING 2019

In the spring of 2019, a small representative group of stakeholders including administrators, faculty, School Committee, parents and community members met to discuss the early thoughts on the direction of education at Concord Middle School and the vision for intersection of instruction and the facility. The Committee conducted research, reviewed survey data, visited schools and aggregated themes. Here are preliminary concepts as to a vision and graphic representing the related ideas.

## Eight Core Principles



## Specifics

### Collaboration

- furniture and spaces designed for the full range of experiences and modes to prepare students to be effective adults

### Flexibility

- various room sizes with ability to combine or divide spaces to support all teaching modes and learning styles
- planning ahead to facilitate future expansion and ease renovation

### Authenticity

- real and warm materials such as natural wood and fabrics
- connection to nature

### Inclusivity

- barrier-free design
- zoning for after-hours and community use
- an auditorium and cafeteria that can hold the entire school
- effective and intuitive circulation for connection and good communication

### Engagement

- spaces for hands-on innovation, creativity and joyful learning
- a green building that can be a teaching tool
- one special defining space or campus element

### Balance

- foster the full spectrum:
  - technology to craft
  - teacher-led to student-led
  - indoors to outdoors
  - independent to group

### Wellness

- sustainable, high-performance school with care applied to comfort, acoustics, natural light and connection to the outdoors
- a school for the whole-person

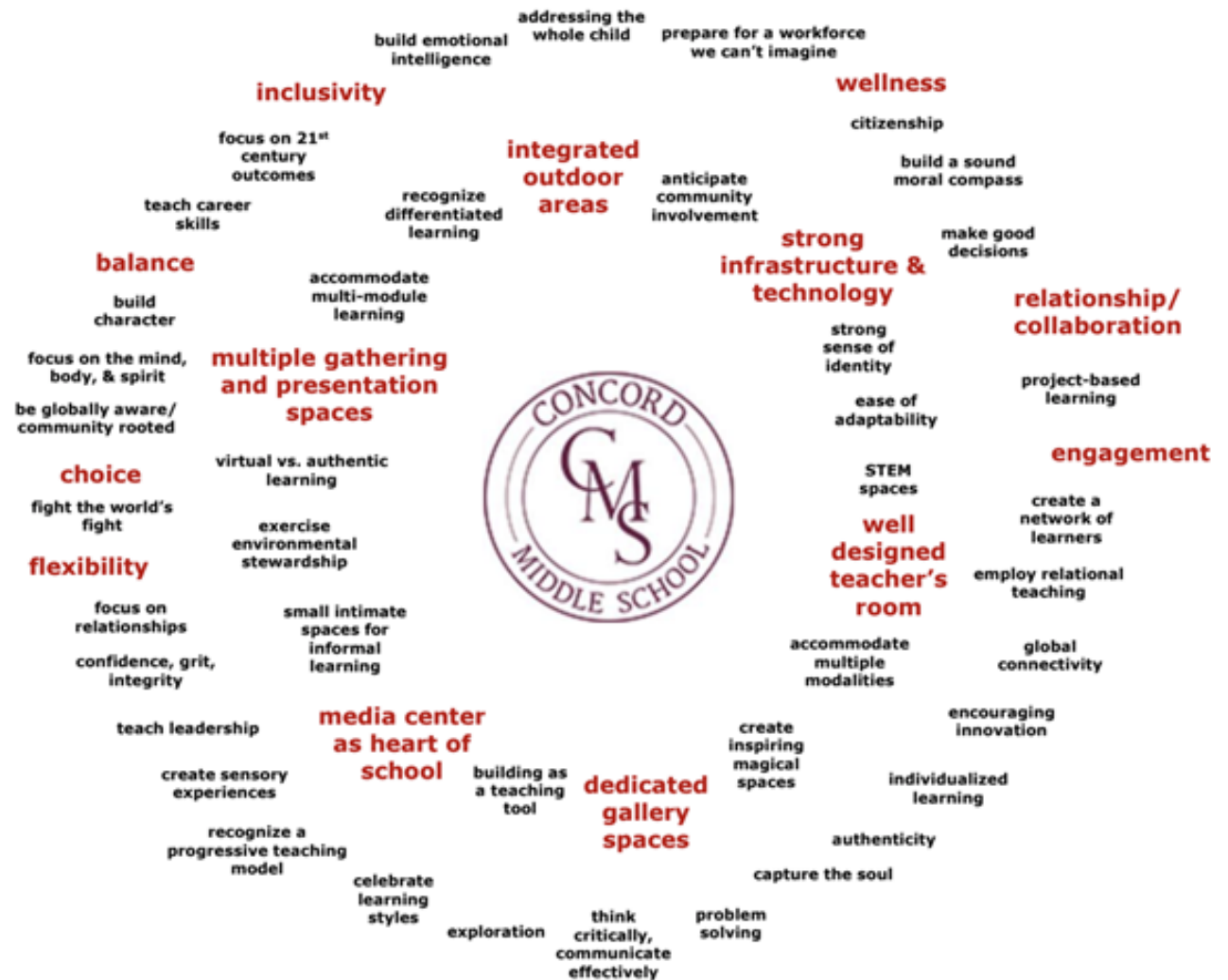
### Choice

- allow for teacher and student autonomy while balancing standards with latitude for individual pathways to success

# VISIONING 2020

Led by the design firms of SMMA and Ewing Cole, a team from Concord Middle School expanded on this to fully encompass further detail of the vision and its relationship to the design of a new Concord Middle School.

The following graphic portrays these discussions in visual form.



## A Team Approach

It is critical that the instructional structure of a new Concord Middle School support this vision and its focus on joy, flexibility, relationships, collaboration, and engagement. A teaming structure fosters this vision through its philosophy, organization, and opportunities.

“A working definition of a teaching team is that two or more teachers combine their talents, expertise, interests, and resources to take joint responsibility for any or all aspects of teaching the same cohort of students.” (Main & Bryer, 2005). The benefits of team teaching are found in the ongoing research over the past two decades including teacher collaboration and student performance (Main & Bryer, 2005). In addition, the relationships in teams lead to emotional benefits for students given their relationships with teachers and peers. (Senechal & Stringer, 2014).

Collaboration among teachers brings multiple benefits including cooperative planning and interdisciplinary learning. Teacher teams are most effective when common planning time and ongoing opportunities to meet in a small group are provided (Flowers et al., 2000).

This planning time presents opportunities for interaction and intersection across the content areas (Mertens & Flowers, 2003). Teachers also develop common assessments, plan curriculum, establish common rules across classrooms, and plan and administer assessments in an organized way that benefits the students such as in coordinating test dates or a method to present assignments (Main & Bryer, 2005).

Student performance improves in a team environment. Shared outcomes, goals, and cohesion become the most significant factors for success (Fleming & Monda-Amaya, 2001). A focus on students extends beyond individual teachers to a collective approach of reflection about areas of need and strength for each child.

Of great importance are the non-academic outcomes for students that emphasize growth in social connections and bonds (Wallace, 2007). Students are essentially in a school within the school for a portion of the day with a smaller community. These closer environments created in a flexible setting develops time for students and teachers to know one another and each other. The team approach fosters student social emotional growth (Senechal & Stringer, 2014) given the intimate environment rather than a junior high model where students and content are isolated.

Comparing a junior high model to a middle school team approach presents clear differences. Junior high schools isolate the disciplines and have schedules driven by the location and timing of each class as in a senior high school. This results in students traveling throughout the school and mixing grades. A middle school team model assigns students to a group of core subject teachers across ELA, math, science, and social studies with the goal of these classrooms being proximate to each other. Maintaining teams where students and educators are not shared or split becomes critical to the effectiveness and benefits outlined in the research. As a result of the team structure, the organization of a new school should promote and highlight this philosophy while noting that space usage is likely to be lower than that of a junior high school.

Currently, the sixth grade has a designated team of teachers for the core subjects of ELA, math, science, and social studies allowing students to be a cohort of one-third of the grade level for these four classes. Teachers meet as a team to ensure that student needs are discussed on a holistic level rather than just according to individual subject areas. The goal of the new building is to allow this teaming to be available to grades seven and eight. Current teacher teams are not physically located together. The two middle school buildings and their layout do not allow for students to remain physically proximate to all of their core classes during the majority of the school day as intended in a team model.

A new school offers the opportunity to unite the three grade levels and bring the vision of a true team based approach to fruition. The vision of a new middle school is to support the creation of three full teams per grade level, eliminating the need for the split team. Similarly, the core classes would be advantaged by common team space where students can work in small groups or individually, rehearse presentations or performances and spread out to solve problems or execute projects. The team's common space unites the team and allows for a shared setting that becomes the hub of the team.

# Grade and School Configuration Policies

## Current Grade Configurations

Concord Middle School serves students in grades six through eight. The challenges lie in the fact that these three grade levels are located in two different school buildings. Up until the fall of 2019, both the Sanborn and Peabody buildings housed all three grades with students assigned randomly. In September of 2019, Peabody opened as an all grade six building and Sanborn opened as a grade seven and eight building. This reconfiguration allowed for a focus on transition to middle school for grade six which has highly benefited all students as they move from the three neighborhood elementary schools.

## Grade Configurations to be Considered

A new Concord Middle School would house the entire sixth through eighth grade student population. Having all students under one roof is a critical goal for Concord, its educators, and its families. It is important to maintain the current sense of a small school community for incoming grade six students as that has proven to be a vital component of the transition from grade five.

## Advantages of Grade Configuration

A new school that can accommodate all of the middle school age students in the community has enormous benefits. School culture will improve because the school will identify itself with a united school community rather than the current dichotomy of having two buildings. Teaching and learning improve because horizontal and vertical professional communication will occur without the barriers of travel or pre-made arrangements since teachers of each content area are located proximate to one another. The new configuration of all sixth grade students in the Peabody building created an additional transition to grade seven. The transition to sixth grade improved with the grade level together in one school focused on developmentally appropriate preparation for middle school with students. These benefits should be maintained in a new school.

By operating in one building, a range of efficiencies will be realized. Currently, the middle school must duplicate certain positions such as the school nurse. Other operational costs will also be consolidated including utilities and building maintenance.



# Class Size Policies

The district is well-supported and resourced allowing for highly effective class sizes. The goal of providing these learning environments is to ensure support and attention to all students in response to their strengths and areas of need. The Concord Teachers' Association Contract outlines thresholds when discussion would ensue.

Current enrollment in the elementary schools is lower than in the past with the average number of students per grade at 213. A complete [enrollment K-12 overview for October 2020](#) is linked to this report. Projections received from the New England School Development Council in January of 2021 indicate the following:

Current Enrollment Concord Middle School October 1, 2020	
Grade 6	216
Grade 7	230
Grade 8	238
Total	684

Enrollment Projections By Grade*																				
Birth Year	Births		School Year	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	UNGR	K-8	PK-8
2015	107		2020-21	39	175	218	219	229	209	233	216	230	238	0	0	0	0	0	1967	2006
2016	119		2021-22	40	229	184	220	222	223	210	237	213	232	0	0	0	0	0	1970	2010
2017	111		2022-23	41	213	241	186	223	216	224	214	233	215	0	0	0	0	0	1965	2006
2018	89	(prov.)	2023-24	42	171	224	243	189	217	217	228	211	236	0	0	0	0	0	1936	1978
2019	116	(prov.)	2024-25	43	223	180	226	247	184	218	221	224	213	0	0	0	0	0	1936	1979
2020	108	(est.)	2025-26	44	208	235	182	229	240	185	222	217	226	0	0	0	0	0	1944	1988
2021	109	(est.)	2026-27	45	209	219	237	185	223	241	188	218	219	0	0	0	0	0	1939	1984
2022	107	(est.)	2027-28	46	205	220	221	241	180	224	245	185	220	0	0	0	0	0	1941	1987
2023	106	(est.)	2028-29	47	203	216	222	224	235	181	228	241	187	0	0	0	0	0	1937	1984
2024	109	(est.)	2029-30	48	210	213	218	225	218	236	184	224	244	0	0	0	0	0	1972	2020
2025	108	(est.)	2030-31	49	207	221	215	221	219	219	240	181	226	0	0	0	0	0	1949	1998

Note: Ungraded students (UNGR) often are high school students whose anticipated years of graduation are unknown, or students with special needs - UNGR not included in Grade Combinations for 7-12, 9-12, etc.

Based on an estimate of births

Based on children already born

Based on students already enrolled

Projected Enrollment in Grade Combinations*									
Year	PK-5	K-5	K-6	K-8	5-8	6-8	7-8	7-12	9-12
2020-21	1322	1283	1499	1967	917	684	468	0	0
2021-22	1328	1288	1525	1970	892	682	445	0	0
2022-23	1344	1303	1517	1965	886	662	448	0	0
2023-24	1303	1261	1489	1936	892	675	447	0	0
2024-25	1321	1278	1499	1936	876	658	437	0	0
2025-26	1323	1279	1501	1944	850	665	443	0	0
2026-27	1359	1314	1502	1939	866	625	437	0	0
2027-28	1337	1291	1536	1941	874	650	405	0	0
2028-29	1328	1281	1509	1937	837	656	428	0	0
2029-30	1368	1320	1504	1972	888	652	468	0	0
2030-31	1351	1302	1542	1949	866	647	407	0	0

Projected Percentage Changes			
Year	K-8	Diff.	%
2020-21	1967	0	0.0%
2021-22	1970	3	0.2%
2022-23	1965	-5	-0.3%
2023-24	1936	-29	-1.5%
2024-25	1936	0	0.0%
2025-26	1944	8	0.4%
2026-27	1939	-5	-0.3%
2027-28	1941	2	0.1%
2028-29	1937	-4	-0.2%
2029-30	1972	35	1.8%
2030-31	1949	-23	-1.2%
Change		-18	-0.9%

\*Projections should be updated annually to reflect changes in in/out-migration of families, real estate sales, residential construction, births, and similar factors.

In considering the target enrollment of 700 for the new construction a great deal of factors were reviewed including current enrollment, projected enrollment, private school enrollments, and available land for housing starts. The formation of three teams per grade combined with smaller class sizes currently in the elementary schools should allow for any growth in enrollment. Should overall middle school enrollment shift toward the 650 student projected eight to ten years from now, class size remains at 19 students on average.



## School Committee Policy

### File: IIB - Class Size

The School Committees will maintain class sizes that ensure effective instruction and efficient use of personnel. Class sizes will be established in accordance with student needs and abilities, equity of staff load, contractual agreements, and health and safety standards.

Approved January 23, 2018

## Concord Teachers' Association Contract

### Article 15 - Staffing

**15.1.** While recognizing that the ultimate determination concerning matters of staffing is reserved to the School District, the parties agree as follows:

- A) **Middle School** - In the major academic departments (mathematics, science, social studies, English and foreign languages), it is desirable that with respect to each such department the ratio of students to teachers approximates an average of 100 to 1. The desirable goal is for classes of no more than 22 students for all classes with the exception of band/orchestra/chorus classes. When classes exceed 24 students, a joint committee will meet to address concerns. The joint committee will be designated by the Superintendent and the CTA president. When a class has unusually high need students the building administrator will meet to consider appropriate solutions or refer to a joint committee which will be designated by the Superintendent and CTA president.

## Current Average Class Sizes by Grade

2019-2020 Average Class Sizes by Grade are as Follows:

	ELA	Math	Science	Social Studies
Grade 6	21	20	22	22
Grade 7	21	19	22	20
Grade 8	19	23	20	22

Class size averages overall are very beneficial given the district's commitment to a positive teacher to student ratio. A challenge, however, is the range that can exist given the current structures. To achieve these averages, sections range from 15 to 26 with a handful at each end of the spectrum. This is a result of the current structure where three grades are served by 3 teams in grade 6, and 2.5 teams in grades 7 and 8.

Based on a design enrollment of 700 students in three grade-levels and three teams per grade level comprised of four core areas (ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science), the class size anticipated is 19-20 students per class.

# School Scheduling Method

Concord Middle School has a history of varying schedules, many of which created class size imbalances or extraneous circumstances in a particular setting (i.e., specialists, special education) as a result of an inefficient scheduling structure. With the 2019-2020 schedule, the structure is effective and provides a sound student experience.

For 2019-2020, the Sanborn building for grades seven and eight operated on a 7 period day on a 6 day rotation resulting in 42 blocks which were broken down into daily classes for the core content areas of ELA, math, science and social studies, 4 days per cycle of World Language in grade 6 with 5 days per cycle for grades 7 and 8 and between 1 and 3 sections of PE, art, digital literacy, health and band/chorus/orchestra or general music.

The same 7 period day on a 6 day rotation is used at Peabody. In reconfiguring the Peabody building for grade six with 3 full teams, the schedule was able to have students in all 4 core classes on team daily on the 6 day rotating schedule with the same 42 periods available: ELA, math, science, and social studies. A daily block for Response to Intervention or Response to Enrichment created a structural ability to provide support to students in need and to offer elective courses all taught by the classroom teachers in addition to specialists, etc. The other 2 periods per day were “off team” allowing for specialists, music, etc.

A presentation providing a visual overview of the [2019-2020 Concord Middle School Schedule](#) is included.

# Teaching Methodology and Structure

## Administrative and Academic Organization/Structure

One principal leads both of the Concord Middle School buildings. A traveling principal brings multiple challenges in trying to be present and available. Each building has an assistant principal assigned to it. A newly created Special Education Team Chair was added to the administrative team in 2019-2020. The configuration of a middle school in one location will bring a discussion of the administrative needs prior to the school's opening. A district-wide METCO Director supports the building. The middle school has a School Resource Officer assigned to it.

As described, the school is organized so that grade levels are broken into teams. Teachers are also grouped according to content areas. Each major content area has a department chair who is a teacher who is afforded classroom release time and a stipend to lead the department in curriculum revisions, assessments, planning, and budgeting.

## Curriculum Delivery Methods and Practices

The middle school faculty provide curriculum to students in multiple ways. Traditional modes of direct instruction and presentation are utilized. Also frequently utilized are cooperative and collaborative models as well as inquiry, project-based and blended learning through the use of technology. The vision of furthering these methods is part of the goals of the new building since the current space can be very limiting. Student engagement and purpose is a priority for the district so creating learning opportunities that motivate young learners is a priority of the project.

All of the major content areas are engaged in Response to Intervention and Response to Enrichment opportunities for students as part of the courses taught and led by core content teachers. Teacher schedules will include a fifth class that serves these small groups of students held in their own classrooms. Further detail is offered in the Academic Support Programming section.

## English Language Arts/Literacy

[English Language Arts curriculum maps](#) are posted on the district website.

English is taught through a collaborative approach focused on student interactions with each other and their teachers. Frequent small group and individual conferences are key components of the program as is the space to allow for these. As mentioned in more detail below, the program actively utilizes performance and drama to bring literature and texts to life and share texts across teams, grades, or the school.

With an integrated approach to the study of English Language Arts, students in grades 6-8 have the opportunity to develop their abilities to read with comprehension, to think critically, to express themselves clearly in speech and writing, and to listen with understanding. Through writing and the study of literature, students will recognize the importance of creativity in themselves and others and will learn to appreciate the work of the writer. Further, they will develop aesthetic enjoyment and judgment and will appreciate the richness of their own and of other cultural heritages.

Through literature and informational texts, students will confront universal concerns and study not only the differences that separate people but also the similarities that unite them.

Concord Middle School English classes meet for approximately 45 minute blocks each day and are heterogeneously grouped. Within each class period, students are offered a variety of activities relative to their abilities and designed to meet the standards indicated in the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

**Writing:** The middle school English department is committed to the writing process approach to writing instruction. This recursive process includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing across all genres of writing - narrative, expository, analytical, persuasive, and poetry. Most writing lessons begin with a whole group explicit instruction of a target skill. Students then have immediate opportunities to work in small groups or with a partner to develop a deeper understanding of the skill, and finally apply the skill directly to their own writing. Teachers provide ongoing feedback, often through Google and/or similar technology platforms, as well as through face-to-face writing conferences.

**Reading:** In addition to writing across all genres, students read and study texts across a variety of genres from a vast selection of literature. The English department is committed to providing students with rich reading experiences that allow all students to see themselves mirrored in a text while also studying texts as windows that provide insight about people's lived experiences that are different from their own. With this approach students engage in the study of core texts with the whole class as well as small group book circles that are differentiated by student interest and reading level. Student-centered class discussion is at the heart of our literature study and provides all students with experiences to develop their critical thinking skills as well as their speaking and listening skills.

Additionally, in our current configurations at Sanborn and Peabody, teachers currently have to be creative in finding spaces for students to work in whole and small group instruction centers; classrooms in a new building could reconfigure space to allow for writer's and reader's workshops to run more effectively. During these workshops, students work in small, flexible groups, often in addition to having individual conferences with one another and the teachers. Additionally, teachers are storing the texts themselves throughout various classrooms resulting in challenges with distribution and collection of books.

Further, many English units culminate in student performances; performing a play like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, delivering a speech to "The Council of the Gods," or running a formal debate as part of a political campaign to elect a new leader for *Animal Farm* requires space for the speakers/performers and space for the audience. In our current building space, teachers vie with each other and the musical performing groups for use of the auditorium or forum; alternative or additional space would better serve the students. In a new building, these types of performances and presentations occur frequently and can take the form of live performances for the entire team or those made into movies or video for others to view later.

In addition, the English department partners frequently with the school library and social studies departments. Maintaining and fostering these connections for literacy across the curriculum and in conjunction with school resources is critical.



Group Work in Classroom

**Intervention and Enrichment:** In grade level and department data meetings, teachers examine whole class and individual data to refine instruction for all students and to identify individual students in need of intervention or enrichment in ELA. In grades six and seven, students in need of intervention receive direct instruction in reading through the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program or reading and writing support in a Literacy and Academic Support class. Students in grade eight are offered pre-instruction and reinforcement of skills in all areas of ELA using 8th grade English curriculum materials in the Developmental Language Arts (DLA) class. Students in all three grades can take a creative writing elective for enrichment. All of the intervention and enrichment classes require spaces for small group and individualized instruction. These classes have occurred as stand-alone interventions during the RTI block described later in the educational plan.

The LLI program, from Fountas and Pinnell, teaches explicit reading skills by using a new, leveled book, each day. Over the course of the class, this means hundreds of books are utilized. Teachers assess students with individualized running records, which also need to be organized and stored. Because teachers run the LLI classes concurrently with LLI classes on different teams, the books and materials are often shared which is challenging given a lack of specific storage.

### **Intensive English**

This special education class takes the place of general education English language arts. It is designed to teach the ELA curriculum and explicit literacy skills to a small group of students identified with specific learning disabilities in reading or writing and those who meet specific diagnostic criteria. Student's closely read texts across all genres, have class discussions, and complete formal and informal writing assignments. The goal of Intensive English is to narrow any grade-level skill gap. The program serves approximately 10-15 students and is held in a separate classroom as a replacement English class in the rotating schedule.

### **Physical Space for English**

1. Spacious and flexible rooms for 24 students to meet in various configurations:
  - › One large circle for all students to engage in class discussion
  - › Two smaller circles; “inside and outside circle” for class discussion
  - › “Stations” for writing workshop, reading groups, and differentiated grammar/vocabulary instruction stations
  - › Gathering space “on the floor” as teacher reads to the class (at least in 6th grade)
  - › Open space for students to get up and move as they engage in interactive, kinesthetic learning/games
  - › Space for individual performance (speech delivery)
  - › Space for small group performance (acting out scenes from plays/books, holding debates)
2. Book storage:
  - › Shelving and/or cabinets within each classroom for books students will read in the year
  - › Separate space outside of the classroom to store books not currently in use - we have lots of books and need storage that all teachers can easily access.

3. Classrooms in close proximity to the library.
4. ELA classes near SS classes to facilitate interdisciplinary work (perhaps with the option to open a wall and join classes?)
5. Large performance space for each clean team to perform plays/speeches for audiences larger than a single class but no larger than for two classes (This might be some sort of shared team space, not exclusive to English, but to which English can have access to create “sets” and leave props, etc.; not a space that is shared with orchestra, band, and chorus in the same day. It has been impossible, for example, to set up for a performance and take it all down for 6th period band and set it all back up again for 7th period ELA).
6. Would love to be able to access an outdoor seating area for outdoor classes and performances.

### **Physical Space for English Intervention (LLI)**

1. Room can be small - 1 teacher and up to 10 students.
2. Lots of storage for the hundreds of books and folders that are part of this intervention program. (The elementary schools have great cabinets they use for this purpose).
3. If we cannot have a separate room for this class, then the Book Storage Room (item 2 in the ELA physical space list) will have to be very close to the room(s) in which the LLI class will take place. The course requires that we hand out new books for every lesson and keep individualized progress data for every student in the class - this all requires lots of organized storage.

## **Mathematics**

[Math curriculum maps](#) are posted on the district website.

As of September of 2020, the sixth grade classes are heterogeneously grouped with plans to unlevel grades seven and eight in place for September of 2021. Teachers differentiate content appropriately which requires small and individual group work and the space necessary for each. The program is based on the transition from the Everyday Math program which relies heavily on manipulatives and comprehension of math concepts through engaging activities, games, and exploration.

### **Grade 6**

In grade 6, instructional time focuses on five critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division, and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking; and (5) reasoning about geometric shapes and their measurements.



## Grade 7

In grade 7, instructional time focuses on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

## Grade 8

Instructional time focuses on four critical areas: (1) deepen and extend understanding of linear and exponential relationships; (2) contrast linear and exponential relationships with each other and engage in methods for analyzing, solving, and using quadratic functions; (3) extend the laws of exponents to square and cube roots; and (4) apply linear models to data that exhibit a linear trend.

## Intensive Math

Intensive Math is a special education class offered in 6th through 8th grade. The students in this class are identified by their special education team as being approximately one to one and a half years below grade level or as having significant gaps in their math skills. The students work on units covering the five domains listed in the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics: The Number System, Ratios and Proportional Relationships, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. These standards are accessed through entry points which encourage students to approach grade level skills with lower levels of complexity, in smaller segments, and at a slower pace. Working through these entry points allows students to work on important skills from previous grade levels in addition to grade level content that is modified for student success. Lessons emphasize the use of different mathematical models and manipulatives in order to accommodate varied learning styles. Additionally, students are given multiple opportunities to practice new skills in class with teacher feedback. The program typically services 10-15 students and is conducted in its own full size classroom as a replacement math class in the normal rotating schedule.

## Intervention and Enrichment

The math program offers sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students' opportunities for reinforcement and enrichment, as needed. All students participate in math screening assessments to determine the need for additional support. Those whose results indicate this need are enrolled in a support class which will focus on both skills necessary for the grade level curriculum and for identified learning gaps. These screening assessments are given periodically, and along with staff review, are used to determine exit and entrance criteria for the support class as the year progresses. As outlined in the Response to Enrichment description, for those students whose screening assessment does not indicate a need for additional support, there is a menu of enrichment classes that can be chosen from. Students indicate their interest in the various offerings and are enrolled in one of their choices.

## Physical Space for Math

Identified Math Classrooms: A teacher who teaches in their own classroom is given a tool that gives them their best opportunity to maximize this process. Students enter the class and know where to get the work instructions for the day and can begin their work independently, they know where to find the homework assignments, know the process and logistics of how and where to find the manipulatives or tools that will be necessary for the day or the activity. Teachers are able to set up workstations, used by one class after another as they cycle in and out of the classroom, set up desk configurations to be used for small groups, differentiated assignments, or whole class instruction. Teachers are able to display student work and visual aids on the wall to enhance instruction. Teachers can store materials needed periodically that are easily and quickly accessible. As students arrive at such a classroom, they know how to find the day's work and begin seamlessly. This space becomes a familiar and comfortable space for students, which helps middle schoolers become open to instruction.

## Science

[Science curriculum maps](#) are posted on the district website.

Our middle school STE program builds upon students' natural curiosity and love of exploration as they learn to think critically about the world around them. Working as individuals and in cooperative learning groups, students develop analytical, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. They learn to make hypotheses, conduct experiments, record observations, interpret data, and draw conclusions based on evidence. Our goal is to cultivate an active interest in science and technology and to develop students' ability and desire to pursue a future in the STE world.

Starting with the Class of 2024, the CMS science program has been using the DESE recommended model of integrated science instruction.

Using this model, students are exposed each year to a variety of concepts from the earth, space, life, and physical sciences, all taught within different thematic units. Much of the students' scientific knowledge is derived from or reinforced by experimental evidence and hands-on activities.



Existing Sanborn Learning Spaces



Example of New Learning Spaces



Fully aligned with the Massachusetts Science, Technology, and Engineering Frameworks (MA STE-16) and utilizing the FOSS Next Generation middle school science curriculum as a foundation, engineering and design challenges are woven in as problem solving experiences at each grade level. Laboratory work and scientific practices are integral parts of each course.

In a new school, daily implementation of a hands-on, inquiry-based science and engineering curriculum requires flexible space which is currently limited. The spaces – indoor and outdoor – need to allow for and promote creativity and innovation. Classroom labs need to be well equipped and have ample space for students to work safely, for the safe storage of science materials and supplies, and for storage of on-going student projects.

In addition to the general design needs of modern classrooms – wall space for visuals, projection area(s), technological versatility, natural light, flexible furniture, etc. - science labs also require specialized chemical and flame resistant benches with numerous accessible electrical outlets, multiple sinks with hot and cold running water, safety showers and eyewash stations, enhanced ventilation systems, and natural gas lines to supply fuel for Bunsen burners.

## Physical Space for Science, Technology, and Engineering

### 1. Science Classrooms with Lab Stations

Ideally one classroom with lab space per science teacher but given the size and expense of these specialized rooms, they could be shared between teams of a single grade level assuming that scheduling allows such a system.

- These lab classrooms should not be shared between different grades as the equipment and lab setups are very different and would be extremely cumbersome to break down and switch out on a period by period basis.
- If lab classrooms are shared, grade level science teachers

will need a separate shared office space to use when they cannot be in the classroom, large enough for three desks, files, etc. This could also be used for grade level planning meetings. Ideally it would be located near the Equipment and Chemical storage room.

Another option could be to have smaller teacher-dedicated science classrooms (without all of the specialized science features) grouped with their individual teams and then centralized grade level shared lab space.

- Either two labs or one large enough to accommodate two classes simultaneously (perhaps separated by a foldable wall) would be needed. Students would then “go on a mini-field trip” for lab work that grade level teachers would schedule in the labs.
- Benefits of this would be the ability to set up and clean up labs during free periods and teachers still having their own dedicated classroom space near their team.
- If the lab space is centralized, it would make sense to have the Equipment and Chemical storage room abutting (or perhaps in between) these areas, with a door for easy access without going into the hallway.



Example of New Science Classroom

Classroom labs need to have ample space for students to work safely, for the safe cabinet and drawer storage of in-use science materials and supplies, and abundant open shelf storage for on-going student projects and experiments. The student storage needs obviously increase if the space is shared between teams.

In addition to the general design needs of modern classrooms – wall space for visuals, projection area(s), technological versatility, natural light, flexible furniture, etc. -- science labs also require specialized chemical and flame resistant benches with numerous accessible electrical outlets at EACH lab station, multiple sinks with hot and cold running water and glassware drying racks, safety showers and eyewash stations, goggle storage cabinets, fire blankets, enhanced ventilation systems, and natural gas lines to supply fuel for Bunsen burners (which are used at all grade levels). They DO NOT require chemical fume hoods at the middle school level.

If the lab space is separated from the classroom space, as it is in CCHS science rooms and the new science room in Sanborn, rather than around the perimeter as it is in the rest of our current rooms, thoughtful placement of the teacher workspace and projection area, with easy access to outlets, computer hook ups, phone lines, etc. is also important. Light blocking shades for the windows are also important for these rooms. Aside from the myriad of videos we show to supplement our curriculum, many of the experiments we do require a darkened room for observation of light beams, spectra, and color emissions from combustion.

## 2. **Science Equipment and Chemical Storage**

A readily accessible grade level Equipment and Chemical storage room with abundant open shelving as well as separate lockable cabinets for chemicals, acids, and flammables is required. One room would be needed for each grade level, assuming science is not centralized in its own location, in which case one larger room would suffice.

The room would ideally have a chemical resistant work bench, hot and cold running water, an ice maker, a refrigerator and freezer, a microwave, and a dishwasher. It would also need an eyewash station and an emergency shower.

## **Social Studies**

[Social Studies curriculum maps](#) are posted on the district website.

The Social Studies department currently incorporates a range of instructional strategies that are flexible and allow for lecture, large group discussion, collaborative group work, and research stations. Student presentations and displays of student work are essential components of the program. Various lessons include the use of technology through individual and large group presentation devices. Mindfulness is often practiced and used to set the tone of the lesson requiring options to create a variety of learning environments. Space to support all of these approaches will improve the effectiveness of the program since execution is often limited given the current facilities. Community resources often visit the social studies department in individual classrooms and in larger groups in auditorium or other large spaces that are not currently easily available.

## **6th Grade Social Studies Curriculum**

### **World Geography and Cultures**

Organizing Questions: How do geographers study the world? How does geography play a role in our understanding of the world?

In this course students will study the Five Themes of Geography. They will apply these themes in understanding the development of cultures and how the themes have shaped history, politics, and economics. The course will travel to different regions around the world, focusing on different components of physical and human geography in each unit.

## **7th Grade Social Studies Curriculum**

### **Ancient Civilizations**

Organizing Questions: How does the development of ancient civilizations affect modern societies? What commonalities can we find between these ancient civilizations and ours today?

In this course, students will study the development of early humans and how they created the first communities and civilizations. They will then apply this framework to the study of various ancient peoples to highlight aspects of civilization and culture. Finally, they will apply these lessons to find similarities and differences that may exist between these past cultures and modern societies today.

## **8th Grade Social Studies Curriculum**

### **United States History (1607-1877): A Search for Justice**

Organizing Questions: What conditions create justice in a society? How can marginalized groups achieve greater rights in a society?

In this course, students focus primarily on the political and social history of the early United States. They will study the colonization and settlement of the United States leading to the creation of the United States Constitution. The lens of constitutional rights will then be used to analyze the marginalization of certain groups in U.S. history and how they were able to gain greater rights over time, leading to the Reconstruction Amendments after The Civil War. Finally, 8th grade students will complete a state-required civics unit and project before graduation to high school.

## **Facility Needs for Social Studies**

The CMS Social Studies department currently has eight full-time teachers over three grades. In order to be the most effective teachers and foster the most effective learners, the Social Studies department has certain classroom and school needs. Ideally, each full-time teacher should have their own classroom. This would allow for a maximum use of time in developing curriculum and working with students, as opposed to using this time moving from space to space and having to prepare classrooms on the fly. Teacher's classrooms often represent their unique teaching styles and include visuals and manipulatives that lend themselves to a certain grade level or Social Studies course.

Teachers also use their classrooms to create patterns of consistent routines for students which is much more easily achieved with a consistent physical space to set-up lessons, agendas, directions, materials, homework assignments, etc. A new school would provide optimal environments that are currently very restrictive for students to spread out in small groups, practice presentations, and share their learning.

#### Physical Space Needs for Social Studies

- Multiple white projection boards per classroom (2)
- Walls and boards in the classroom for easily displaying teaching visuals (maps and posters, for example)
- Modular, flexible seating (tables, not desks) for differentiated instruction (might include standing desks though)
- Large enough classrooms to accommodate flexible teaching including group work, large and small group class discussions, and hands-on projects.
- Common storage for multiple textbooks per grade level per teacher (400+ total books)
- Common storage for dedicated Social Studies materials
- Public displays for student work throughout the school (prominent cases and/or boards in hallways)
- For mindfulness and better health; non-fluorescent lighting, natural sunlight, plants
- Commonly available and accessible spaces for dramatic productions, simulations, assemblies, speakers (auditorium, team “performance space”)

## World Languages

[World Language curriculum maps](#) are posted on the district website.

The World Language Program (WL) at the Concord Middle School consists of courses in French, Mandarin, and Spanish.

Students begin their sequential study of language in the sixth grade and continue with the same language in the seventh and eighth grades. All classes are heterogeneously grouped. Classes meet four times per weekly rotation in the sixth grade and five times per weekly rotation in the seventh and eighth grades taught by seven (7) World Language teachers. The World Language Program seeks to develop proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Student progress is monitored using the ACTFL proficiency scale. Students learn to function in a variety of social settings. Language skills and cultural knowledge are enhanced by the use of textbooks, manipulatives, online and computer activities, songs, cultural materials, and readings. Varied methods such as group work, paired work, and direct instruction are used to help all students develop communicative proficiency. The current facility limits the availability of space appropriate to this work. A new school would allow for appropriate space within the classroom as well as in common team areas and presentation spaces.

The World Language teachers at CMS have been trained in OWL (Organic World Language) and CI (Comprehensible Input). Both methods of teaching focus on developing students’ proficiency through targeted means of study.



World Languages City Project

Examples of methods used by World Language teachers are outlined below:

- The OWL Circle students and teacher stand in an open space circle where the teacher leads the class through targeted questioning, paired work and games with the goal of advancing students' level of proficiency. The philosophy behind having students stand in a circle is to build community, meet the needs of kinesthetic learners and eliminate the separation of a desk between student and teacher.
- CI (Comprehensible Input). This approach has been the basis for district-sponsored professional development for all World Language teachers in the Concord Public Schools and the Concord Carlisle School District. This approach includes posting functional chunks of language, question words and the calendar on the classroom walls as a tool by which the teacher teaches. A visual verbal approach helps to facilitate language acquisition as the students can see the language at the same time, they are hearing it. Also included in this approach are storytelling, picture talk, movie talk and student interviews.
- Building community and trust is essential in the World Language classroom. The teachers use an array of tools to engage students and encourage active participation. These tools include but are not limited to board games, flyswatter games, pool noodles, hula hoops and beach balls. An additional aspect of building community includes creating a visual learning environment that reflects a diversity of cultures. As embracing diversity aligns so well with the teaching of World Language, our classroom displays naturally reflect cultural competency.

As reading is a crucial part of language acquisition, World Language teachers have been building FVR libraries of readers and children's books in the target language. Our classrooms house these libraries to support student exposure and daily reading in the target language.

Project-based learning is an integral part of Middle School education. To support this, the eighth graders at CMS participate in the City Unit where students construct a culturally authentic building. The floor of the classroom is then transformed into a mini city where students place their building. The month-long unit, rich in vocabulary and culture, is scaffolded in such a way that students learn the city-themed vocabulary in the target language and then build on that with language related to asking for and giving directions. The culmination of the project includes an Open House, during which students' families have the opportunity to tour the "cities" in the French, Mandarin and Spanish classrooms.

### World Language Space Needs

There are seven (7) teachers in the WL department. Six (6) of these teachers are full time and one (1) is 0.8 / part time. Each full time teacher teaches five (5) classes per day with two (2) periods for planning and collaboration. 96% of the student body at CMS studies a World Language. In 6th grade, students attend WL 4x a week per 6 day rotation. In 7th and 8th grade, students attend WL 5x a week per 6 day rotation. The department has specific space requirements to accommodate the pedagogical needs that align with current trends in language acquisition. Being proximate to the team pods is also important.



These space requirements include but are not limited to:

### **Storage**

A storage closet in each classroom to house teaching tools including board games, mini whiteboards, pool noodles, hula hoops, beach balls, sample student projects, videos and art supplies. Storage areas in the existing classrooms are approximately 7' X 7'.

### **Shelving in the classroom**

Built in shelving for each teacher's FVR library, student workbooks and textbooks, dictionaries, teacher photocopies, art supplies and manipulatives. An estimated 50 linear feet is needed for this based on existing shelving. An additional 20 linear feet to act as display shelving for student work and 3D cultural really would be ideal based on experience with our existing space.

### **Seating**

There is significant student movement in WL classes. Therefore, desks that are easily moveable are essential. For example, the ability to fold desks against the wall would be ideal.

### **Sound + Audio/Visual**

As listening comprehension is a crucial part of language acquisition, high quality speakers that are built into the classroom would be ideal for increasing students' proficiency levels. A computer cart fixed in each classroom to hold French/Spanish/Chinese media. As some of our media is only viewable with Pal-Secam (European media format), each classroom would need to be equipped with this device.

### **Ample Wall Space/Bulletin Boards**

It is necessary to have ample wall space with bulletin boards to post chunks of language and vocabulary around the classroom. Not only does this aid in student comprehension, but the teacher uses the walls as a teaching tool. Ample wall space also allows the teacher to display student work, posters and images supporting our goal of diversity and cultural competency. In addition to posting language on classroom walls, teachers do activities where they post pictures and/or dialogue prompts/questions on the walls and students walk around the room, look at the pictures and either talk about them or write about them. A green screen measuring 10'x10' to place on the wall for recording student presentations would be invaluable. A green screen would enable students to tailor their presentation with a background that is culturally authentic. For example, if students are doing a presentation on weather, they could change their background to a weather report in France/Spain/China.

### **Stage**

A stage measuring 6' x 8' (that could fold into the wall when not in use) in each WL room where students can present skits and dialogues would add to the excitement of each presentation and facilitate the use of a green screen. Ideally, the green screen would be placed behind the stage, with appropriate lighting, to enhance student performances.

## Sink

WL classes are creative and at times messy. Students participate in various cultural activities that require cutting, gluing, glitter, painting, etc. For example, the Chinese classes welcome a Chinese painter each year to teach students how to paint the Chinese characters. This requires paintbrushes and black ink. The French and Spanish teachers engage students in similar cultural and artistic activities. Having a sink in each WL classroom would lessen transition time between activities as students would not need to leave the classroom to wash their hands.

## Classroom Needs

It is essential for WL teachers to have their own classrooms. WL teachers have a significant amount of props to deliver their lessons, use their walls as a teaching tool, have sound needs to deliver their listening comprehension activities and have a unique need for desks one day but open space the next. The rigor of the WL program at CMS prepares students to achieve a high level of proficiency. In order to maintain the quality of the program and the way in which the content is delivered, allotted space for WL classes in the new building is crucial.

## Academic Support Programming Spaces

### RtI and RtE at Concord Middle School

#### Introduction

In 2018/2019, coinciding with the reconfiguration of the two sixth grade through eighth grade middle school buildings to one sixth grade building (Peabody building) and one seventh and eighth grade building (Sanborn building), RtI (response to intervention) was rebooted and RtE (response to enrichment) was introduced at Concord Middle School. These offerings occur as part of a teacher's course load and are currently taught in the teacher's regularly assigned classroom or workspace.

#### Response to Intervention (RtI) at Concord Middle School

The goal of the RtI program at Concord Middle School is to offer all students who are below grade level an intervention class in math, English, executive functioning, or social emotional well-being before a referral in special education is made. As of 2019/2020, the percentage of students receiving costly special education services at Concord Middle School is far greater than the average of most middle schools in Massachusetts. The crux and essence of the RtI program at Concord Middle School comes in the fact that students are placed in RtI classes that are led by their core licensed teachers in the area that data suggests they need intervention. In essence, the student in need of an intervention in math (for example) returns to their academic team and core math teacher's classroom to receive a second math class in a smaller group setting, tailored specifically to the deficient skills. This opportunity for a second class in an area of need led by the core teacher in their classroom is meant to bring down the high percentage of special education referrals and students at Concord Middle School receiving special education services. This staffing approach is in lieu of hiring reading, literacy, and math specialists.

At the start of the school year, all students take three diagnostic screeners: Renaissance Star Reading, Renaissance Star Math, and the social and emotional strength based screener the PEAR Holistic Student Assessment. The Renaissance Star Reading and Renaissance Star Math are computer adaptive screeners and a progress monitoring tool that students take in about a thirty to forty minute sitting.

The PEAR (Partnerships in Education and Resilience) Holistic Student Assessment partners Concord Public Schools with McLean Hospital and Harvard Medical School and is a youth self-report survey that assesses students' social emotional strengths and challenges.

All students upon entering Concord Middle School engage in a shared experience of a Tier 1 response to intervention class called CMS Fundamentals that all sixth graders take September through early December of their sixth grade year. The 6th grade fundamentals class teaches CMS students how to learn in four key areas: reading, digital citizenship, successful student practices, and group work. The class will help ease the transition from 5th to 6th grade while also cultivating and reinforcing healthy and productive habits that the students will need throughout their time at CMS. Like all intervention classes offered at Concord Middle School, a great importance of the Fundamentals curriculum lies with it being led by the sixth grade students' core teachers, the classroom of this core teacher, in the students' team hallway.

Following first trimester of sixth grade, all students sixth through eighth grade have equal access to the following trimester long intervention classes at Concord Middle School:

#### **LAS (Literacy and Academic Support) and DLA (Developmental Language Arts)**

These are two reading and writing intervention classes led by the licensed English teachers at Concord Middle School. Students are offered these two Tier 2 response to intervention classes before special education referral happens in the area of reading and writing. In grades six and seven, students in need of intervention receive direct instruction in reading through the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program or reading and writing support in a Literacy and Academic Support class. Students in grade eight are offered pre-instruction and reinforcement of skills in all areas of ELA using 8th grade English curriculum materials in the Developmental Language Arts (DLA) class.

#### **LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention)**

This is a second reading and writing intervention class led by the licensed English teachers at Concord Middle School. Students are offered this Tier 2 response to intervention class before special education referral happens in the area of reading or writing. The LLI program, from Fountas and Pinnell, teaches explicit reading skills by using a new, leveled book, each day. Over the course of the class, this means hundreds of books are utilized. Teachers assess students with individualized running records, which also need to be organized and stored. Because teachers run the LLI classes concurrently with LLI classes on different teams, the books and materials are often shared. A dedicated space for all of these resources is imperative to continue with the LLI program.

#### **Math Strategies**

This is a math intervention class led by the licensed math teachers at Concord Middle School. Students are offered this Tier 2 response to intervention class before special education referral happens in the area of math. The overall goal of this math intervention class is help students attain grade level math skills through: Mastery of number facts; proficiency with procedures for operations with numbers through further concept development and repeated practice; use of appropriate resources such as reference cards, math dictionaries, math texts, and appropriate technologies; additional concept development in number and operations, algebra and algebraic thinking, measurement and data, and geometry.



### **Systems and Strategy Practice**

This is an executive functioning intervention class co-taught by our school psychologist and a core teacher at each grade level at Concord Middle School. Students are offered this Tier 2 response to intervention class before special education referral happens in the area of executive functioning. This is an executive functioning intervention class that will teach students the organization skills they need to navigate middle school and help them better understand themselves as a learner. This class is meant to offer 6th grade students who may need additional intervention after Fundamentals Tier 1 class and before a special education referral is made in the area of executive functioning.

### **PEAR**

This is a social and emotional intervention class co-taught by our guidance staff. Students are offered this Tier 2 response to intervention class before special education referral happens in the area of social and emotional well-being. The curriculum is organized through three domains: resiliencies (action orientation, emotional control, assertiveness, trust, empathy, reflection, and optimism); relationships (relationships with peers, relationships with adults); and learning and school engagement (learning interest, critical thinking, perseverance, academic motivation, and school bonding).

### **Response to Enrichment (RtE) at Concord Middle School**

Prior to the 2018/2019 school year, only the DLA, LLI and math strategies classes were available to students upon teacher recommendation and the classes were only offered opposite a special class like art, PE, or health (Meaning students who took these classes were pulled from their art or PE class). Starting in 2018/2019, additional LLS, LLI, math strategies sections were offered along with the Systems and Strategy Practice and PEAR intervention classes described above. These classes meet opposite an enrichment block for students who screen above grade level on the Renaissance Star Reading, Renaissance Star Math, and the social and emotional strength based screener the PEAR Holistic Student Assessment. The middle school is committed to measuring the growth of students above grade level in the area of English, math, SEL, executive functioning, science, technology, social studies, music, arts, and World Language.

Example of classes offered in the enrichment program at Concord Middle School offered by core teachers in their core classrooms opposite the intervention block. This staffing models aligns with schools who create an “X block” where all students select a topic of interest and are taught by classroom educator.

### **Math Investigations**

In the math investigations class, students will engage in math explorations related to the 6th-grade curriculum. Possible topics include: the history of the number system, financial literacy, finding patterns in numbers, ratios in nature and music, estimating large volumes and heights, and using spreadsheets to analyze data. This class is a great opportunity for students who enjoy exploring mathematical concepts or who are looking to expand their mathematical knowledge.

**Venture Opportunities**

A “start your own business class”. If you’re like a lot of people, you might find yourself wondering about what it takes to build and run a business. As you’ll learn in this course, being an entrepreneur is a rewarding but challenging activity that requires a lot of careful planning and hard work.

**Neurobiological Wellness**

In this enrichment class students will learn how to take care of their bodies and minds. Each session has a physical component (yoga/stretching/nature walk) and a mental component (show - do with - lead). We’ll take qualitative and quantitative data each physical component session (heart rate, respiratory rate, stress-rating scale). We’ll explore the physiological connections between various physical stress release mechanisms and brain reaction!

**Power Brain**

Your brain is an organ, and we can treat it like a muscle. Like any other muscle you can condition and exercise your brain. Brain Education is an experiential brain training program that includes physical, emotional, and cognitive exercises to maximize your Power Brain. The class will focus on how emotions, memory, physical health, creativity and cognition all play into the learning process. Power Brain improves focus, memory, creativity, confidence, emotional and physical well-being. The teacher will be utilizing games, exercises, and activities to create a fun, challenging and optimal learning environment.

**Artists Discussing Artists**

In Artists Discussing Artists, each class students will come with a new fun fact about a contemporary artist they have found through their own research. Information on the materials the artist works in, what concepts the artist considers, and much more will be the center of this discussion-based class. Improve your conversational and presentational skills in this student-driven Enrichment program. Who knows, maybe by the end artists will create their own artwork, inspired by the artists they have learned about over the course of the trimester!

**World Travel Class**

Students in this enrichment class will be researching and presenting about a selected country that they are interested in researching. Students will share their findings with the class. As a part of their presentation, students will create an artifact to present to the class. Each student will have an electronic journal and a passport to record the countries that they are exploring in class.

**History’s Mysteries**

History’s Mysteries will consist of an experience where students will explore some of history’s greatest mysteries. Students will learn how to think critically, examine primary and secondary sources, and research using various techniques. By the end of the term, each student will choose a mysterious happening in history and display their skills as a historian to solve a myth.

**Intro to Coding**

In the Introduction to Coding class, students will use HTML and CSS to create your own website. After the website is published, students will use JavaScript to program a new computer game.

**French Literature and Media**

In this enrichment class students will explore the ways in which French language is used in media and literature. Resources will include books, print and TV advertising, radio, and other written and audio sources. Materials used will be in French, so this enrichment is intended for current students of French or students with a background knowledge of the language.

**Songwriting**

In Songwriting, students will learn the art and craft of songwriting. Students will explore the elements of songwriting: lyrics, rhythm, melody, harmony, and song structure. They will work on their original compositions through a series of group and solo activities.

**Sphero Robotics**

In Sphero Robotics students will learn to program and use Sphero Robots for a variety of activities. Students will use digital tools to broaden their perspectives and enrich their learning by collaborating with others and working effectively in teams.

**Creative Writing**

This ELA Enrichment class offers students the chance to practice their creative writing skills. The class covers the study of plot, characterization, conflict, imagery, and figurative language. Using a variety of writing prompts, students will write poems, short stories, and flash fiction.

**Exploring Cultures Through Film**

In this enrichment class students will watch films from all over the world. They will then be creating a product that reflects what they have learned about each culture. Some projects will be done individually, and others will require being part of a group of 2 or 3 students.

**Scratch / Pixelmator**

Beginner or advanced, students are invited to stretch their abilities with Scratch and Pixelmator in this class. Design Scratch projects individually and on teams with themes that could include Animations, Stories, Games and DeBugging. We will add in Pixelmator (like Photoshop) as another way to create sprites and backgrounds for your Scratch projects. Whether their interest in Scratch is digital drawing or coding, or both! There is opportunity for fun and learning in this class.

## Student Guidance and Support Services

Concord Middle School offers extensive support to students through five guidance counselors, a school psychologist, a school adjustment counselor, an ELL teacher, and METCO academic advisor, K-12 METCO Director, and School Resource Officer.

Guidance counselors support students through individual and small group meetings, often having students visit them for lunch groups and individual needs. The counselors are assigned to a grade level or portion of a grade level and work to have strong relationships with their students and families. Counselors meet with students both with educational plans and those in regular education. An adjustment counselor is available to the most intensive social emotional special education program, ACCESS. Currently, each counselor has an office space available to meet with students. These spaces are located within the academic wings of both buildings in order to be proximate and accessible. They are often very small and less than ideal for creating a supportive counseling environment. In a new middle school, we would propose that the counselors be spread throughout the academic wings in order to be visible and easily accessible to students. The psychologist supports students through counseling in addition to conducting special education evaluations which occur in a private, quiet setting.

One ELL teacher instructs a current caseload of 10 students and meets with them in a pull-out environment. A full time METCO academic advisor works closely with the approximate 35 Boston students who attend Concord Middle School in order to ensure their academic and emotional health through push-in and pull-out opportunities for students. The K-12 METCO Director is in the building on a regular basis also frequently meeting with students. Finally, the Concord Police assign a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) to the middle school to both build positive relationships with students as well as to support the administration when issues arise. At times, the SRO will need to interview individual students and can use an available conference room to do so.

### HomeBASE Student Advisory Program

HomeBASE is a custom designed advisory program developed over the course of two years and piloted in fall 2017. All students begin each day in their small advisory group of approximately ten students. This is typically taking place by having the groups congregate in separate areas of their first period classroom. CMS' HomeBASE Mission statement: HomeBASE provides a safe environment in which students build community and establish connections. B.A.S.E. is an acronym for:

- B - "Bullyproofing" challenges
- A - Academic advising
- S - Social/emotional development
- E - Entertainment & fun

Given the small group size and facilitation by the entire Middle School staff, space will be required in a new school to support this daily meeting.

# Teacher Planning

## Existing Teacher Planning Spaces

Teachers are assigned 5 courses when considered full-time. These five classes occur within the seven period day and six-day cycle. Teachers have two periods per day for preparation and meetings. Since each teacher has their own classroom, planning periods occur within the classroom. The classrooms are also used for various professional meetings during the school day. A large faculty room also allows teachers a space to eat lunch together and collaborate before and after the lunch periods.

### Proposed Changes to Planning Time and Number of Spaces

Discussion of proposed changes is ongoing. Teachers would highly utilize access to the classroom where they teach during planning periods in order to allow for readiness of materials and instructional space. It is known that certain designs would lend themselves to a common planning room where teachers have individual and group work space. Engaging with the staff throughout the evolution of this area will be important.

### Current Professional Development Practices

Concord offers multiple opportunities for ongoing professional growth and development. Afterschool courses led by the district are regularly available through the Concord Fellows program. Curriculum work occurs when small groups of teachers or a department submit initiatives to the Director of Teaching and Learning to update and improve curriculum during the summer or afterschool. At the middle school, every meeting opportunity is focused on professional growth including department, team, and staff meetings. During these group events, discussions of initiatives in mental wellness, cultural competency, technology integration, and meeting the needs of all students are a frequent focus.

These meetings are held in various places based on availability and capacity. The current middle school offers few spaces that are meant for adult learning and requires ongoing reconfiguration of student spaces, large and small.

### Proposed Changes to Professional Development Practices

Professional development will continue toward the inquiry and engagement goals for the future in addition to co-teaching, cultural competency, and student wellness. With a shift to online learning during the 2019-2020 school year as a result of the pandemic, it is expected that some use of the technology will continue in the future given increased participation rates. In a new school, the teams and departments would look to have adult learning space available to foster the professional environment possible. While a space devoted just to this is not required, a large group space that is flexible and offers opportunities for large group presentations and discussions as well as small group discussion would be optimal. Currently, the entire staff convenes at least monthly, most often in the school cafeteria at traditional lunch tables with poor acoustics. A space more conducive to professional dialogue and learning would be beneficial.



Existing Teacher Planning /Work, Break Room

# Lunch Programs

## How Program is Delivered

The program is currently delivered in multiple lunch services where grades six and seven are split across multiple lunch periods and grade eight has its own lunch with 240 students eating in an undersized cafeteria. The current space at Sanborn makes this all grade eight lunch overcrowded.

Lunch service is provided in a traditional single service line with limited menu options. The [middle school lunch menu](#) is posted on the district website.

**Proposed changes and why, or statement that no changes are proposed.**

The vision of a new Concord Middle School is to create a scramble service area where a variety of meals could be provided on a daily basis. Students could select their preferences among hot and cold choices. The goal of creating an inviting space for eating with a variety of seating arrangements is a priority.

Inclusive seating that varies in type is important to address the needs of students with special needs. Grade lunch services would allow for an anchor to the schedule that maximizes learning time. The hope is that the cafeteria can be a space where the community is welcomed, and students feel is a critical part of their belonging in the school community.



Existing Cafeteria



# Technology Instruction Policies and Program Requirements

Concord Middle School is a 1:1 environment where each student is assigned an individual MacBook Air. Through the use of Google Classroom, the technology is a core component of the educational program. Teachers all have a virtual presence. Students utilize the computer as a tool for production, research, collaboration, and organization. Teachers receive ongoing training opportunities throughout the school year and during the summer. A sharing of best and creative practices is highly encouraged and available to teachers through staff, department, and team meetings. [Highlights of summer 2020's professional development](#) is provided.

Concord Middle School offers students a rich set of instruction in technology use as described below.

## Digital Literacy (6th Grade)

Class time: Typically, twice per six-day rotation, for the whole year.

Course Description: This introductory course for 6th graders is designed to instill sound digital citizenship habits, teach skills and strategies for effective computer use, and explore computational thinking and systems at a basic level. Students will use Scratch to explore programming concepts and a variety of tools to understand how computers work and the connection to programming. The curriculum follows the Digital Literacy and Computer Science state frameworks. The skills and strategies taught are planned to be used and reinforced in most, if not all, of the students' core academic classes. This program is currently taught by a technology integration specialist and is performed on students' devices.

## Code Tech: Computer Science Discoveries (7th & 8th Grade)

Class time: Typically, twice per six-day rotation, for half of the year.

Course Description: Based on Code.org's Computer Science Discoveries curriculum, this new course for 7th and 8th graders is designed to further student skills and experience with computational thinking and systems and bridge the gap between block-based coding (such as Scratch) and language-based coding (such as Python). Connections with the science curriculum, other interdisciplinary opportunities, and real-world applications are emphasized throughout. This program is currently taught by a technology integration specialist and is performed on students' devices.

Both Digital Literacy and Coding instruction would benefit from computer lab classroom set-up (even if students are using their own devices). This should include ample electrical outlets, a teacher projection area, and circular seating that allows the teacher to easily see all computer screens without having to weave through rows of desks.

## Applied Tech: Engineering Science (7th & 8th Grade)

Class time: Typically, twice per six-day rotation, for half of the year.

Course Description: The engineering science curriculum is strongly integrated with the FOSS units, consisting mainly of projects grounded in the science concepts taught throughout the middle school years. Approximately 80% of class time is spent in hands-on project work, either in groups or as individuals, giving students an opportunity to explore and practice all facets of the engineering design process. This program is taught by a science teacher in the science lab.

The iterative nature of applied technology and engineering courses and electives requires a dedicated space (perhaps shared with the maker space). This process is necessarily messy, has very different equipment and storage needs from science courses, and therefore could not easily be supported in a shared classroom science lab space.

Thoughtful design of this space would include a large storage closet for supplies, ample open shelf storage for student projects, multiple outlets at all workstations (perhaps coming from the ceiling as they do in the engineering space at CCHS), robust tables, hot and cold running water, adequate ventilation, and other safety features (eyewash stations, goggle cabinets). This space would also require a traditional teacher projection area.



Example of New Applied Technology Space



## Project Engineering Enrichment (7th & 8th Grade)

Class time: Once per six-day rotation, for one term.

Course Description: This one-term mechanical engineering project-based elective allows students to discover how the components of a structural system work together to serve a function.

Students will work in pairs to design and construct a scale model bridge capable of holding 100 times its own weight. This program is taught by a science teacher in the science lab.

## Makerspace Enrichment (all grades)

Locations: Makerspaces are found in the libraries of both CMS buildings.

Description: Facilitated by the CMS library staff; our Makerspaces are the newest additions to our middle school STEM offerings and provide an opportunity for student “tinkering” that can be hard to fit into the confines of more formal class structure. Access to the makerspace can happen during afterschool club time, elective blocks, and on a drop-in sign-up basis. For an idea of some of the fun projects taking place in these spaces, check out the [Makerspace webpage](#). Discussion has ensued about combining the engineering and Makerspaces in the future. This is a drop in activity currently with hopes for full class access in the future.



Existing Sanborn MakerSpace

# Media Center/Library

The library is considered the intellectual, social and innovative heart of the school with an approximate count of 15,000 books across the two locations. The Sanborn space is self-contained and used for informal social gathering by students. The Peabody space is in the hub of three classroom wings with bookshelves that double as walls to create a separate space. Small makerspaces have been created on an ad hoc basis in each building in order to make some progress in offering students that kind of opportunity. Teachers can book this space for the purposes outlined below or send individual students to the library. Current use varies often as a result of space limitations.

A [description of the library's work](#) is posted on the website.

The media center is an integral part of the Concord Middle School. Its purpose is to support and enrich all areas of the curriculum and to provide interesting and informative material for students. The collection is carefully maintained with special attention toward quality, interest, variety, multi-cultural richness and age appropriate reading levels.

Research is supported through print resources, internet, and on-line subscription databases. Close collaboration exists with the libraries and computer labs, and each library is fully automated with Destiny (Follett) providing access to all library collections in the Concord elementary and middle schools, as well as Concord-Carlisle High School.

The library research schedule is determined in June for the following year. Social Studies, English, World Language and FACS bring classes in all grades to the library for research projects. Teachers may also sign up for available space and resources any time during the school year, and students are encouraged to come to the library for study hall, lunch, or other unscheduled times during the day. Other teachers request that library resources be placed in the classroom to support ongoing curriculum units.

Classes come in during the year for book talks supporting outside reading projects. Students in all grades receive individual and class instruction in search strategies for electronic reference applications, periodical indexes and the Internet.



Existing Media Center/Library



Example of New Media Center/Library

The library staff is always available to make recommendations for outside reading. Students may check out most material for two weeks; reserve books and magazines may be checked out overnight. Reminders for overdue materials are given to students in homeroom for up to four weeks; overdue notices are then sent home. Students should settle their accounts before they check out new material. Students will be billed for any material that has been lost, damaged beyond repair, or not returned.

The library staff is comprised of a Library Media Specialist who coordinates all programs in both buildings, and a full time assistant in each library who oversees the operation of the facility. The libraries encourage and welcome the service of volunteers. Each library needs help in general operation and maintenance tasks. Volunteers also run the PTG Gift Book Program, a very successful initiative that allows parents to purchase books for the libraries honoring a special person. PTG gift books are available at Back-to-School night in the fall.

Volunteers have also assisted in processing and displaying new books for the Annual Read-Off, a non-competitive reading program that runs for four weeks in the spring, beginning with National Library Week.



Existing Sanborn Library



# Visual Art Programs

The [middle school art curriculum](#) is posted on the district website.

Concord Middle School students take art twice a six-day rotation at CMS. It is a full year course.

## Grade Six

During this foundation year students experience a wide variety of visual media and are introduced to the elements of art (line, shape, color, texture, pattern, form). They begin to learn ways to concretely evaluate their own work as well as the visual world around them in terms of these elements. Basic color theory is reviewed and amplified, with emphasis placed on the emotional and visual effects of this art element. Students use pattern and texture to enhance the visual and tactile aspects of painting and sculpture. They study and interpret shapes and forms in nature using various media to describe what they see, feel or imagine.

Concepts and skills learned in grade six are strengthened and augmented. In two-dimensional work, students emphasize color value and contrast. They experiment with new drawing and painting techniques to create work from both observation of the natural and fabricated world as well as from the world of the imagination. Mixed media and clay construction introduces further variety to students' three-dimensional expression. As a result, kilns need to be readily available and accessible. Compositional strategies are introduced.

## Grade Seven (two classes per week)

Beginning in seventh grade, classes are organized by trimester, with each class centered around a central concept:

### Drawing (trimester one)

Students practice drawing skills that are fundamental to all art making. This includes representational and non-representational approaches.



Example of New Visual Art Classroom



Example of New Visual Art Corridor Display

### The Imagined World (trimester two)

Students investigate strategies for representing the world of memory, imagination, feelings and experience.

### 3D Art (trimester three)

In this multimedia class, students apply themselves to the processes involved in solving visual problems three-dimensionally.

## Grade Eight (two classes per week)

Students work with more complex visual concepts and applications of the elements of art. They continue to draw expressively as well as realistically. Using an experimental approach, they observe inherent properties of artistic media and materials in order to arrive at unique solutions to visual problems. They use sketchbooks to create visual collections as a basis for future work and to document their thinking and processes. In critique and discussion, we strive to orchestrate meaningful use of the full complement of art elements and compositional concepts.

Again, classes are organized by trimester and concept:

- The Natural World (trimester one)
- Student artists use science and nature as sources and inspiration for expression.
- Portraits (trimester two)
- Students investigate the concepts and practices of portraiture from various traditions and perspectives.
- Bookmaking (trimester three)

Students explore the creation of books as a format for artistic expression, using a variety of techniques and approaches. They explore sequencing and juxtaposition to build meaning.

## Evaluation (all grades)

We evaluate each student according to the following expectations:

- Each student puts his or her best thinking and effort into visual projects
- Each student strives to devise his or her own unique strategy for expression
- Each student actively expresses ideas in discussions and critiques
- Each student respects other students and their work
- Each student respects tools, materials and work space

### Facility Needs

- Work stations for students to have ample space to work on projects in multiple mediums including ceramics, painting, and drawing.
- Display space to share student work
- Storage space to store art supplies, equipment, and materials
- Space for kilns to support the clay program

# Performing Arts Programs

The [music department curriculum](#) is posted on the website.

## Program of Studies

At CMS, every student chooses one year long primary music course. Students choose between General Music, Band, Chorus or Orchestra. Each class offers the opportunity to sing, play instruments, improvise, compose, read, and listen to music. This choice model allows students to explore music while also choosing which aspect to focus on. Students in General Music focus on creating, composing and listening to music. Students in Band, Chorus and Orchestra focus on music performance. Selecting a performance group also means committing to additional after school rehearsals and performances for the school year.

The General Music course helps students explore various aspects of music. Students will sing, play instruments, improvise, compose, and notate their own compositions. Students will also listen to and reflect on works of music from various time periods.

By the end of the year, each student will have instrumental experience with hand drums, keyboard, and guitar. Nearly every unit ends with a small group project demonstration. Our performing ensembles at CMS perform at least one winter and one spring concert.

Curricular ensembles may also participate in informal/informational performance - which we refer to as “informances” - and compete in the MICCA Concert Festival each spring. Students in Band/Orchestra are permitted to join the chorus as well! When 6th grade students begin term 2, they will be invited to add chorus as their elective. In grades 7 and 8, instrumental students can add chorus for the entire school year.

## Facility Needs

**Guiding Principle:** We need a facility comparable to a modern high school music department, because our program is larger than a typical modern high school music department.



Existing Band, Chorus or Orchestra



Example of New Band, Chorus or Orchestra



1. **In the 2019-2020 school year, there were 426 students enrolled in CMS Music Ensembles.** Over 50% of the school population participated in band, chorus or orchestra. This is 238 more students than CCHS (44% larger).
2. **Our instrumental music programs serve students in grades 4-8.** There is no dedicated Band or Orchestra space (rehearsal, storage or otherwise) at any of the three elementary schools. CMS must host many K-8 activities and all storage.
3. **We have 5 full time music faculty members shared with the elementary schools, teaching 4 disciplines.**
4. **A state-of-the-art facility opens up additional revenue streams through hosting concerts, festivals and auditions for area-organizations.** It also presents the opportunity for high-level collaboration by having professional ensembles “in-residence.” Ample practice rooms and breakout spaces would allow us to bring the private lesson program offered through Concord’s Community Ed Dept into CMS more effectively, providing our students better access to this opportunity (especially our Boston METCO students).
5. **We have a few different types of performances.** A large auditorium (CCHS equivalent) would allow us to host all of these events. A mid-size auditorium would move “informances” to the gym and some traditional concerts (2-6 per year) to CCHS. A small performance space or no performance space could move all performances (10+) to CCHS and eliminate the possibility of a school musical.
  - › Traditional Concerts (multiple large ensembles, rotating) for each performing area (Band, Chorus, Orchestra)
  - › Informances - all band students (approx. 200) sharing one space in an open-rehearsal/workshop type format for the larger community to learn about how our program works and what we are working on in band.
  - › Small ensemble concerts (honors choir, jazz band, chamber groups) in a more intimate setting
  - › School Musical - 50+ cast, full crew, pit musicians. Occupies the auditorium for most of the winter.
6. **Short term storage is needed for the instruments that students bring in each day but keep at home.**
  - › Shelving vs. cabinets (no lockers)
  - › Located outside of band/orchestra rooms with space for assembly.
  - › If storage absolutely must be located inside the room, will need the ability to close (i.e. lockers) as well as additional space for instrument assembly in class



Orchestra Concert at Sanborn

## 7. Long Term Storage Needs:

› **Band**

Wind instrument storage: 10 Tubas, 4 Euphoniums, 4 Trombones, 4 Horns, 4 Baritone Saxophones, 4 Tenor Saxophones, 6 Bass Clarinets, 2 Bassoons, 2 Oboes, 2 Piccolo, 2-3 clarinets, 2-3 trumpets and 2-3 alto saxophones.

› **Percussion**

Some stays in room, some in storage. - 4 Timpani, 2 Bass Drums, 8 Mounted Concert Toms, 4 Snares, 2 Trap Tables, Several suspended cymbals, stands, Gong, Two trap tables, Percussion cabinet, Marimba, Small Marimba, 2 Xylophones, 2 Vibraphones, 2 Chimes, 2 Orchestra Bells, Assorted hardware, Assorted cases for all drums, cymbals and hardware, Drum Set, Congas, Timbales, Bongos, Keyboard, Multiple amplifiers, PA Speakers, and various hardware.

› **Orchestra**

30 Violins, 3 Violas, 5 Cellos, 5 Basses, One small harp

› **Chorus / Choral Risers**

Due to low storage needs, Chorus could also serve as General Music or Orchestra space.

› **General Music**

5 Wenger Lab Workstations (62" wide, 30" deep). Room for 5 desks inside each classroom, 20 small midi keyboards (16-1/2"W x 3-1/4"H x 9-5/8"D), 40 Guitars (stored on rolling Wenger Racks, already owned by CMS), 2 Drum Sets, 37 Drums, and 40 Mallet Instruments.

# Physical Education Programs

All students participate in the physical education program with grades seven and eight also engaging in health and the family and consumer science program. Given the number of classes per cycle per grade level and availability of space, the gyms are utilized throughout the school day with additional space available for FACS and health.

[Overviews of the program according to each grade level](#) are posted on the district website.

## Physical Education

The physical education department provides instruction to all students across grades 6-8. Students participate in quality instructional physical education programming twice a cycle, for 45 minutes each class. The curriculum is presented in accordance with the Massachusetts Frameworks and the National Standards for Quality Physical Education.

The curriculum follows a developmental sequence from body management competence to fundamental skills to specialized skills, while simultaneously addressing physical fitness and social skills. CMS has 3.0 FTEs for Physical Education, divided among three educators.

The PE department shines in its use of technology to enhance teaching and learning. Teachers engage students with the use of multiple iPad apps for instruction, monitoring, taking pictures and videos, and the web based FitnessGram assessment. While the desire and knowledge for appropriate use of technology is present, teachers struggle with continuous robust wireless access, lack of safe, secure, and easily accessible storage, and the inability of the technology to work properly when there is too much background noise. The new facility should address these issues.

Currently, there are two gyms – one medium-sized (Sanborn) and one “small” (Peabody). At Sanborn, two classes must “double up” in the medium gym in order to accommodate all of the instructional sessions.



Existing Gymnasium



Example of New Gymnasium



Another significant challenge is the lack of ample and appropriate storage space for large equipment and general PE supplies.

In the “new” building we need a third teaching space to accommodate three grade levels. A fitness center as a third teaching space would provide an optimal area for students to have a well-structured and organized physical education class where students can engage in appropriate physical fitness activities.

The curriculum for the middle school physical education program is made up of team sports, individual sports, lifetime sports and group problem-solving activities. Team sports teach students how to play together and function as a member of a team and to coordinate individual efforts to achieve a goal. Individual sports give students a chance to better their previous performance. These activities give the students a chance to push themselves as much as they choose. Individual activities include fitness, track and field, pickleball, table tennis and badminton.

Group problem-solving activities are invaluable. They teach students to work together as a unit to solve various tasks. These activities build confidence, develop cooperation and break down social inhibitions. They foster feelings of togetherness, accomplishment and pride.

## FACS (Family and Consumer Sciences)

The Family & Consumer Science Program (FACS) is offered to all grade seven students twice a cycle, all year. FACS is one of the three courses at the middle school that provides Comprehensive Health Education. The FACS curriculum is integrated with the health and physical education curricula in the Massachusetts Department of Education Health Curriculum Frameworks. Through Family & Consumer Sciences curriculum and instruction, students develop the attitudes, knowledge and skills needed for responsible and effective management of their lives.

FACS assists students at a time when they are assuming greater responsibilities within their homes and communities. This discipline teaches students to integrate the relationships among individuals, families and communities. There are explicit goals for developing positive social skills. The emphasis on positive social interaction encourages tolerance, compassion and a spirit of cooperation.

FACS utilizes technology for solving human problems and meeting human needs. This discipline provides hands-on and inquiry-based experiences that deepen understanding of abstract concepts through encouraging the use of process skills, communications, and reflective thinking. It provides for the direct application of math, science, language arts and other academic skills. It also readily adapts to an interdisciplinary approach, helping students become aware of the connections between knowledge and skills in all areas of the middle school curriculum.



Existing Family and Consumer Sciences

FACS enrichment/elective courses also provide valuable hands-on experiences for students in both 7th and 8th grade. They include Regional Foods of the U.S. and Basic Sewing.

In the current FACS classroom, there is a cooking lab area which includes 5 kitchens. Six kitchens in this space would be ideal with large class sizes for safety reasons. There is ample space for both storage of 25 sewing machines and use of 12 sewing machines during one class period ( includes numerous electric outlets for sewing machines) Storage space for food, kitchen tools and equipment and sewing materials and equipment must be included in any new school design.

## Health

“One needs to be educated to develop and protect one’s health and needs abundant health to make full use of one’s education.” - Delbert Oberteuffer. This quote serves to reinforce the rationale for the Health Program here at Concord Middle School. The overall goals of the program are to provide the students with factual information and meaningful learning experiences, so that they are better equipped to make sound health decisions throughout their lives. Health Education is offered to sixth, seventh (FACS), and eighth grade students. At each of these levels, the approach is multi-dimensional in that it deals with the physical, social and emotional aspects of one’s health.

### Sixth Grade

The sixth grade program meets once a cycle, year round, and deals with a wide spectrum of health concepts and promotes positive attitudes and behaviors concerning oneself and others. Students learn the relationship between making healthy decisions and showing respect for themselves.

**Seventh Grade** (see FACS description above)

### Eighth Grade

The eighth grade program meets twice a cycle, year round, and deals with similar topics as sixth grade, but zeroes in on understanding self and others from a different level of adolescent development than sixth. Students become aware of the relationship of self-esteem to issues such as peer influence, decision-making, substance abuse, eating disorders, taking good care of your-self and respecting others. On-going class discussion is a vital part of this eighth grade course, and discussions vary from small to large group depending on the topic. Role-playing is another effective method used at this level to better understand attitudes, behaviors and healthy decisions.

## Physical Space for Gym

1. Large Gym space that is big enough for 2 PE classes to be in that area at the same time.
  - › Full size basketball court with at least 10 feet of space between the boundary lines and the wall (safety purposes).
  - › Tall Ceiling & Well Lit
  - › A curtain or dividing wall to split the gym into two spaces -
    - MULTIPLE USES:**
    - PE classes
    - After school athletics
    - Grade level use
    - Community use
2. A second space for PE classes. This could be a fitness room or a smaller gymnasium. We need a third teaching space for our classes.

3. Storage Space
  - › Equipment storage closets in the gymnasium. Big enough to hold all of our PE equipment for grades 6 - 8. This Storage space needs to be big enough to hold Hockey goals, Volleyball/ badminton stands, Gymnastics mats.
4. Locker Room Space
  - › Lockers for student use
  - › Bathroom & Sink
5. PE Office
  - › Bathroom & Shower
6. Athletics
  - › Separate and additional appropriate storage space for the Athletic Department
  - › Coaches office



6th Grade PE



## Physical Space for FACS (Family & Consumer Sciences)

Classroom space for FACS (and related enrichment courses) must provide space for seating of students, kitchen lab, sewing, and the storage of equipment and supplies.

1. Classroom space that contains 5 kitchens (student safety will be an issue if less than 5) At least one kitchen is handicap accessible
  - › Each kitchen has a full size sink, oven and designated kitchen cabinets.
  - › Space for one large capacity refrigerator
  - › Space for one full size washer and dryer
  - › One dishwasher
  - › Lockable storage cabinets for dry goods/ingredients and equipment
  - › Space for teacher demonstration table
2. Space in classroom for six 6 foot tables for 20-24 students. (Tables instead of desks are needed to facilitate the sewing enrichment course)
3. Storage closet for 25 sewing machines, sewing equipment and supplies.

## Physical Space for Health (6th and 8th grade)

1. This space needs to accommodate all 6th and 8th grade Health grade health classes. There are approximately 36 blocks of Health per 6 day cycle.
2. Space needs storage for health related materials.
3. A designated Health room is imperative to provide consistency of instruction in a health education focused environment. (with numerous permanent visuals displayed on the walls of the classroom)

# Special Education Programs

Concord Middle School special education provides a wide-spectrum of services for students who have been identified with a disability and require specially designed instruction/intervention or related services in order to access the general curriculum. As a department we have made a commitment to:

- Provide exceptional services to students with disabilities using research based instructional techniques
- Provide services in the least restrictive environment
- Monitor student progress toward individual goals
- Support families of students with disabilities through the process
- Maintain a collaborative relationship with the parent community in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Special education should be viewed as part of the continuum of supports, services and interventions created to ensure the general education environment is responsive to the diverse learning needs of all students. Inclusion is a core belief and practice at CMS. This educational model challenges schools to meet the needs of all students by educating learners with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers. The environment necessary to nurture and foster inclusion is built upon a shared belief system between general and special education, and a willingness to merge the talents and resources of teachers. Working together, general education and special education staff can ensure equal opportunity, full participation and increased outcomes for students with disabilities. An inclusive education helps prepare students with disabilities for an integrated adult life and builds understanding and acceptance within the broader community.

## Our Current Program of Services and Implementation in the New Building

### Consultation Services

Consultation refers to an in-direct service where specialists meet with the team of teachers in order to address the implementation of the IEP and monitor student progress. This service may be provided by special education teachers, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists, behavior analysts, occupational therapists, physical therapists or other related service providers.

### In-Class Support

In-class support refers to services provided by a special education teacher or paraprofessional within the general education setting. This service reduces student to teacher ratios, improves students with disabilities ability to access general education curriculum, and supports students' academic and behavioral needs in the general education setting. The new CMS building offers instructional spaces adjacent to general curriculum classrooms that will enable support staff to facilitate break-out groups of 2-4 students at a time, lead help sessions, and provide a limited distraction area for independent work.

## Workshops

Our special education workshops provide students with direct specialized instruction outside of the general education classroom. Workshops generally meet two or four periods per cycle and are comprised of approximately 12-15 students. This support is designed to target specific skill sets in order to supplement the general education curriculum. Special education teachers deliver research-based instruction in a small group setting that enables students to hone their skills. While this is the current model, the goal of inclusive services for most students is the vision for future meaning separate workshop spaces that are needed now will not be as critical. What will be critical is the availability of small group spaces adjacent to or within the general education setting.

### Math Workshop

This workshop is designed for students that have difficulty with acquisition and application of mathematical skills in computation and conceptualization. This tutorial provides support for the classroom material in which the student is enrolled, as well as direct instruction and practice in concepts/skills related to the student's individual needs.

### LEAP (Learning Executive and Academic Processes)

This workshop is designed to support students with executive functioning weaknesses that impact their ability to access grade level curriculum and exhibit their true understanding of content. Our curriculum focuses on the following areas of executive function:

- Self-Reflection/Metacognition/Goal Setting
- Organizing Tasks, Assignments, and Materials
- Planning and Prioritizing
- Time Management
- Memory Strategies/Study Skills
- Cognitive Flexibility/Self-Monitoring and Shifting

### Writer's Workshop

This workshop uses researched-based instruction to improve each student's ability to participate in the writing process and express their ideas through writing. As we progress, we will introduce the EmPOWER method. The EmPOWER method teaches the multi-faceted process of writing explicitly within six steps that build on one another:

- Evaluate (dissect the assignment to find out what I have to do)
- Make a Plan (plan how to approach the task and choose strategies)
- Organize (represent and organize the relationships between ideas)
- Work (structure ideas and express them in writing)
- Evaluate (assess work to determine what needs to change)
- Re-work (decide how to make changes)

## Reader's Workshop

This workshop is designed to help struggling learners in grades 6 and above become proficient readers and confident learners. Each student will have the ability to work in three instructional strands of Word Study, Grammar, and Comprehension. Students will learn discrete strategies that can be generalized across academic settings.

## Literacy Workshop

This workshop is designed to provide instruction to students who require more intensive structured literacy instruction. Instruction is direct, explicit, and language based.

Students receive instruction in:

- Word structure, in depth, for automatic decoding and spelling
- Word recognition and spelling of high frequency words, including irregular words
- Vocabulary, word understanding, and word-learning skills
- Sentence-level text reading with ease, expression, and understanding
- Listening comprehension with age-appropriate narrative and informational text
- Reading comprehension with narrative and expository text of increasing levels of difficulty
- Narrative and informational text structures
- Organization of information for oral or written expression
- Proofreading skills
- Self-monitoring for word recognition accuracy and comprehension

## Intensive Classes

Our intensive classes provide students with research-based direct instruction in the areas of math and English language arts. These programs are designed to support students who are unable to access curriculum in the general education setting. Special education teachers target specific skills and use student entry points to introduce curriculum concepts. Full descriptions are found in the Math and ELA sections of the report.

## **ACCESS Program**

The middle school ACCESS program is a therapeutic program that serves students with social/emotional/behavioral disabilities and other mental health disorders. These students present with a range of challenges including difficulties with anxiety, behavior, mood regulation, school avoidance, and social skills. Students may also struggle with comorbid diagnoses such as learning disabilities, executive functioning deficits, depression, attachment disorders, and ADHD. ACCESS addresses students' needs using both educational and therapeutic interventions that promote academic, social, emotional, and behavioral growth. Classroom activities are closely aligned to Concord Middle School learning standards, grade level benchmarks, and practices. The blending of the educational and therapeutic services allows for the students' emotional stability and learning. A multi-modal process of intervention is practiced.

The ACCESS Program provides students with comprehensive services tailored to students' unique needs, as determined by their IEP. Services include program-wide and individualized positive behavioral interventions, evidence-based therapeutic instruction, coordination with outside mental health providers and families, and crisis intervention. Students participate in general education classes with ACCESS support and are also provided with small group instruction and positive behavior supports overseen by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. The program's adjustment counselor offers ongoing 1:1 and small group therapeutic support and social skills instruction. Parents are encouraged to meet with the ACCESS Team every 6 weeks to discuss student progress and to ensure consistency across home and school settings.

## **Special Education Related Services**

Other special education services are provided as determined by student needs. When appropriate, these support services are provided within the general education classroom but may require a separate setting. The new CMS building and additional instructional spaces adjacent to classrooms will enable specialists to provide support in close proximity to their general education classrooms.

## **Speech and Language**

This service is designed to support students with unique communication challenges. Programming is highly individualized based on student needs but may include vocabulary building strategies, developing a stronger understanding of our cognitive organization, learning new (or improving existing) receptive and expressive communication skills, remedial instruction in articulation, stutter, apraxia etc. social pragmatic skills, and assistive technology consultation.

## **Counseling**

This service is designed for students with emotional needs that impact their ability to access the general education setting. Counseling supports are highly individualized, but the intervention is designed to enhance self-awareness, self-regulatory capacities and self-determination. Under the guidance of the counselor, the student is introduced to an array of self-management, self-regulatory, communication, and social skills in a safe, controlled, non-threatening private setting. The methods of intervention vary, depending on the developmental needs of the student.



## **Occupational Therapy**

This service supports students' ability to participate in daily school activities or "occupations". This service is highly individualized based on the needs of each student. With a focus on student strengths and strategies to compensate for areas of weakness, the occupational therapist helps students support academic and non-academic outcomes. Because of their expertise in activity and environmental analysis, practitioners are particularly skilled in facilitating student access to curricular and extracurricular activities.

## **Physical Therapy**

This service supports students' ability to access the educational environment. This service is highly individualized based on the needs of each student. As experts in movement, they assist students in physical participation in a variety of settings throughout the school day.

## **Anticipated Special Education Programs and Services in the Next Five Years**

### **Co-taught Classrooms**

As mentioned, a major goal of special education is to support inclusive classrooms. The goal is to foster collaboration and stimulate our development of co-taught classrooms, which will further our commitment to instruction in the least restrictive environment.

### **Program for Students with Autism-Spectrum Disorders**

A program designed specifically to support students on the autism spectrum is required in upcoming years given the current needs in the elementary schools for full or partial day support. Students in this setting may spend an extensive portion of the day in this setting depending on individual needs.

### **Substantially Separate Language-based Classroom**

A program designed specifically for students with language-based learning disabilities is also a need of incoming elementary students for full or partial day support. Students in this setting may spend an extensive portion of the day in this setting depending on individual needs.

### **Facility Use and Space Requirements**

Special education services are provided in a variety of settings, including the general education setting. However, in order to support our students with the most significant needs, it is important to also have separate designated special education spaces. Both instructional spaces (of varying sizes) and teacher workstations are crucial to the success of our special education programs and subsequently the learning of one of our most vulnerable populations. The special education department currently employs 28 full-time employees. This includes one administrator (Team Chair), 11 special education teachers, one speech and language pathologist, one school psychologist, one adjustment counselor, eight tutors, two educational assistants and three 1:1 aides. In addition to these full time staff, we have a part time Board Certified Behavior Analyst and contracted occupational therapists and physical therapists on an as needed basis.

**Physical space in the general education classroom:**

In order to promote inclusion and develop a thriving co-taught classroom, special education staff and materials should be integrated into the classroom design. This should include designated work areas for staff, storage of instructional materials, and flexible seating options for students.

**Small group instructional areas:**

Small group instructional areas should be designed for the implementation of special education workshops, intensive English and math, speech and language, and other related services. These spaces should comfortably accommodate up to 12 students and 2 adults and should have a flexible layout. Students will access these areas for small group instruction, but also as a limited distraction space for academic work and assessments during their general education classes, so ideally these spaces should be located adjacent to academic classrooms. These spaces would be necessary for all three grade levels and would likely be utilized during all class periods.

**Substantially separate classrooms:**

Classrooms to house our students with significant needs (SEL, Autism, Language-Based disabilities) should be located adjacent to other academic classrooms. These rooms should have a flexible layout and include ways to divide spaces into separate areas to accommodate a variety of sensory, emotional, and academic needs.

**Access to alternative physical education space:**

In order to provide physical therapy services and also to use kinesthetic movement to accommodate sensory and behavioral needs of students, the special education department should have shared access to alternative physical education spaces as needed. (1-2 blocks per day?)

**Workstations and Offices:**

In order to develop individualized education programs, facilitate formal and informal student evaluations, and communicate with families, it is imperative that special education teachers have designated offices and/or workstations.

**Access to conference rooms:**

Team meetings, annual reviews, eligibility meetings are integral parts of the special education programing, as such it would be important to have at least two designated conference spaces.

# Extracurriculars

## Clubs

Concord Middle School offers an exceptional variety of extracurricular clubs for students. This range of opportunities parallels that in most high schools. The middle school students are highly engaged after and before school hours with the goal that there is an activity for every child. A complete list of these many activities is posted on the [Concord Middle School webpage](#).

## Indoor and Outdoor Space for CMS Athletics

CMS has a number of areas, indoors and outdoors, that are used for our after school intramural and interscholastic athletics programs. We currently have and hope to maintain two 11v11 soccer fields, a full-sized baseball diamond, and a full sized softball field on the upper field at Sanborn. There is an additional softball field on the lower field at Sanborn where there is also a full sized field-hockey field. The leaching field at the side of the Sanborn building is used for flag football and ultimate frisbee, while the trails through the woods at Sanborn are used by the Cross-Country team. The track team practices on the soccer fields at Sanborn and holds its meets at Emerson Park by the high school. Finally, there is one additional 11x11 soccer field at Peabody (Cushing Field) that is maintained by the town and is used for games only; it is also used by the Concord Youth Soccer program. In fact, a number of town and club programs use all of the fields at Sanborn and Peabody when they are not in use by the CMS teams. Off campus, the tennis team is fortunate to be able to use 2 tennis courts at Rideout, and the cycling club is excited to use the newly opened bike trails that run behind the schools.

For indoor space, we currently use the full size basketball court at Sanborn for the interscholastic boys' and girls' basketball teams as well as the intramural volleyball team, dodgeball group, floor hockey team, and high jump program. JV high school basketball and town programs also use the Sanborn gym when the CMS team is away. The "not-quite full-sized basketball court" at Peabody is used for intramural basketball and during interscholastic basketball tryouts and preseason.

All of the equipment and uniforms are stored in the large storage space in the Sanborn gym, and students use the locker rooms to change and store personal items during practices. The storage area and locker rooms are outdated and present challenges for organizing equipment and keeping items safely stored.

# Transportation Policies

Concord Middle School provides bus transportation to almost all of its middle school students with exceptions for those living in close proximity to the school. Currently, the buses have to stop at Peabody to drop off sixth graders and then make a second stop for the seventh and eighth grade at Sanborn. The same process occurs in the afternoon.

With great anticipation, we look forward to the consolidation of this process for one stop at both the beginning and end of the day to afford many efficiencies and reduce the complicated logistics.

Parents are frequently driving students to and from school as well. The current lack of safe waiting space is a safety issue as is management of the volume of cars which line Old Marlboro Road at both the beginning and close of the school day. Students who live close to the school walk and will also need to have improved safety measures as a priority. The pandemic brought with it a significant increase in bike ridership to school and use of the newly completed public Rail Trail. A new school should have plans for traffic flow to minimize these issues and maximize student safety.

# Security and Visual Access Requirements

Security is an important element to a new building. Both buildings currently have very limited security camera capacity making it far less effective than possible. Visual access to the main entrance for visitors is necessary for the front office staff. The schools are locked throughout the school day with access permitted through a buzzer system at the main office. Among the current challenges are the outdoor modular classrooms at Sanborn and lack of doors on classrooms at Peabody. Housing everyone in one building is a particular improvement from the current situation.

Through ongoing work with the Concord Police and reviews and updates of our safety plan, it is clear that there are requirements for doors to lock and secure students and teachers in the classroom. As an ALICE district, it is also imperative that students have a means to exit the classroom should that be a preferred safety option. Entrances that can separate the public from students and teachers initially would be valuable so that there is tight control as to who is allowed into the school setting. It would be very beneficial to have adequate camera access to help manage situations when they arise and instill a sense of confidence and security.



# Specialized Space Needs

## Auditorium

As noted throughout the educational plan, performance is critical component of a number of programs at Concord Middle School. The music program incorporates ongoing performance throughout the school year as outlined in the [Example Calendar](#) that is linked here. The performance groups of band, orchestra, and chorus range from 60 to 100 students each. Adequate space on stage for this number of students is essential for both rehearsal and performance events. The events may focus on a singular group or include multiple groups. The current middle school stage is inadequate forcing most concerts to the auditorium at Concord Carlisle High School.

In a small auditorium, audience space would allow a concert for one group to perform without options for peers to attend or to include multiple groups. This is limiting but manageable. A bigger auditorium for 500 would provide adequate seating for groups to combine, observe one another, and allow for guests for all performers.

Additionally, a spectacular annual musical production is put on at Concord Middle School. Although it has been presented in the Sanborn building, the environment is far less than ideal with major lacking to the sound system and lack of climate control.

The musical includes scenery that involves extensive setup and ideally would only be moved on a limited basis. This flagship event is a highlight of every school year.

Performance is also very integral into the core content areas. For example, English routinely performs Shakespearean plays as part of the Shakespeare unit and utilizes the auditorium space.

The auditorium is also a space where school events are held regularly. Grade level assemblies focused on building

school cultures, special presenters, and anti-bullying. A small auditorium that houses one grade level will allow for these events but requires repeated performances and additional cost often. A larger auditorium would minimize the repetition and create a stronger school culture when more students can be combined. It is understood that any whole school event would need to occur in the larger space of a gymnasium.



Existing Sanborn Auditorium



6th Grade Forum Assembly



Example of New Auditorium

## Team Commons

A common space shared by multiple content classrooms would allow for the flexibility needed during the type of instruction envisioned for a new Concord Middle School. This flexible space provides room for small groups of students to work, rehearse presentations, and complete projects. Students can also assemble in larger groups for the performances described by the English and World Language departments as essential elements of their curriculum. Typically, the team may develop a process to schedule formal extensive use of the space while leaving less formal usage to an informal process.

## Small Group Learning Spaces

As indicated in the descriptions of student support services and special education, small group instruction in areas of need are foundations to the academic program. With a goal for extensive inclusion opportunities, a pullover space adjacent to a classroom allows a group of students to receive direct small group instruction. It could also provide an extension space for students who are working on extensions to the curriculum to collaborate and create. Sharing of these spaces by the team will also create an opportunity for discussion of the types of instruction and needs of students. Scheduling of the groups may be created on a regular, ongoing basis although leaving some slots open for use on an as-needed basis would be very beneficial.

## Gymnasium

The core physical education program currently conducts multiple classes simultaneously. The proposed schedule in a new middle school would require three classes to occur at once. The vision of two classes in a shared gymnasium space would meet the curriculum and activity needs. An additional third space of mixed use creates opportunities for equipment and activities that we are currently not able to provide such as aerobic fitness equipment. As mentioned, the space is also highly utilized in the extracurricular athletic program, especially during the winter basketball season where students often stay to watch basketball games afterschool.



Example of New Alternative PE Space

# Final Statement of Intention

The vision of a unified Concord Middle School has been decades in the making. The schools that have housed grades six, seven, and eight were not intended for this use over forty years ago. Providing a learning environment to further the preparation and confidence students experience will allow student needs to be met for another fifty years. Creating a united school with teams focused on connections will enhance the climate for learning. Providing appropriate space for the extraordinary range of programs and opportunities for all students will further student opportunities and experiences. It is an exciting opportunity to see the vision actualized and optimally service the children of Concord.

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