

**Oak Hill Middle School**  
130 Wheeler Road  
Newton, MA 02459  
(617) 559-9200 fax (617) 552-5547  
John\_Harutunian@newton.k12.ma.us

**John Harutunian**  
Principal

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January 25, 2016

Dear Families of Incoming Sixth Graders,

Welcome to Oak Hill Middle School! We are delighted that you live in the Oak Hill district and have a child about to enter sixth grade. The teachers and staff at Oak Hill are planning a number of events to promote a smooth introduction to middle school for you and your child.

Parents of fifth grade students are invited to meet with the Oak Hill Administrative team and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade counselor, Jennifer Ames, on **Thursday, March 3, 7:00-9:00 p.m.** in the auditorium at Oak Hill Middle School. This meeting will initiate the process of transition into the sixth grade. You will have an opportunity to learn about the sixth grade program and school-wide activities, as well as the orientation process that has been designed to support your children as they move into a new school at the end of this year.

Additionally, we invite you to visit Oak Hill Middle School in session on the mornings of **Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> or Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> any time between 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.** Please stop by the cafeteria to meet guidance counselors, assistant principals, and the PTO Presidents, have a cup of coffee and be matched up with a Peer Leader to take you on a tour of the school.

The Oak Hill PTO Presidents, Guidance Counselor and I also plan to visit each of the three elementary feeder schools for a morning coffee with parents. The schedule for those visits:

**Tuesday, April 26, 8:30-9:15 a.m.** at Memorial-Spaulling  
**Monday, May 2, 8:30-9:15 a.m.** at Zervas  
**Wednesday, May 4, 8:30-9:15 a.m.** at Bowen

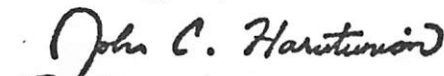
There will be two scheduled opportunities for incoming sixth graders to visit Oak Hill with their classmates and elementary teachers:

1. Oak Hill musical, '*Oklahoma!*', Tuesday, March 8, 9:00-11:00. **Students will be bussed to this performance. The elementary teachers will oversee permission slips.**
2. Citywide '*Step-Up Day*', Friday, June 10, 11:30-2:15 - details available later in the spring.

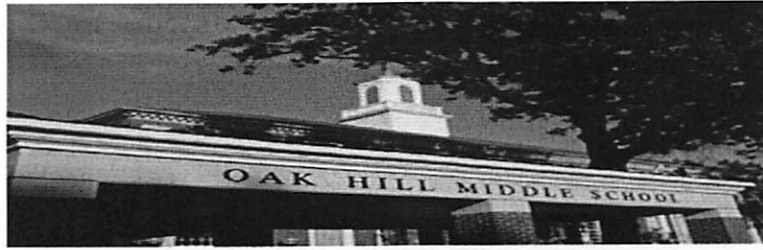
A guidance counselor and I will also meet with fifth graders at each elementary school in the spring to speak with students about Oak Hill and answer questions. Current sixth grade students accompany us and serve as "ambassadors" to share the student perspective.

On behalf of the Oak Hill community, I again welcome you to Oak Hill Middle School and look forward to meeting you on **Thursday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

Warm Regards,

  
John Harutunian  
Principal

# Oak Hill's Transition Events for Spring, 2016



<b>Information sent:</b>	<b>Monday, January 25</b> Incoming Grade 6 informational packet sent home with students.		
<b>Incoming Parent/Guardian Night: Class of 2022</b>	<b>Thursday, March 3</b>	<b>7:00-9:00 P.M.</b>	Come learn about Oak Hill Middle School's program of study. <b>Location:</b> Oak Hill Auditorium
<b>Musical:</b>	<b>Tuesday, March 8</b> Grade 5 students come to Oak Hill for our musical production of Oklahoma! <b>Location:</b> Oak Hill Auditorium		
<b>Parent/Guardian Tours &amp; Coffees:</b>	We will answer any questions that you may have about the transition to Oak Hill.		
	<b>Thursday, April 7</b>	<b>8:30-10:00</b>	
	<b>Friday, April 8</b>	<b>8:30-10:00</b>	
<b>Parent/Guardian Coffees:</b>	<b>Do you have questions about Oak Hill Middle School?</b> Time for parents to talk with Principal and Counselor on-site at each feeder school.		
	<b><u>Memorial-Spauldning</u></b>	<b>Tuesday, April 26</b>	<b>8:30 - 9:15</b>
	<b><u>Zervas</u></b>	<b>Monday, May 2</b>	<b>8:30 - 9:15</b>
	<b><u>Bowen</u></b>	<b>Wednesday, May 4</b>	<b>8:30 - 9:15</b>
<b>Principal Meets Students:</b>	Students meet Principal and Guidance Counselor to learn about Oak Hill Middle School and to answer their questions.		
	<b><u>Memorial -Spaulding</u></b>	<b>Tuesday, April 26</b>	<b>9:15-10:15</b>
	<b><u>Zervas</u></b>	<b>Monday, May 2</b>	<b>9:15-10:15</b>
	<b><u>Bowen</u></b>	<b>Wednesday, May 4</b>	<b>9:15-10:15</b>
<b>Online Registration:</b>	<b>Thursday, March 3-Monday, April 11</b> World Language and Musical Ensembles Sign Up <a href="https://goo.gl/S6Ke8M">https://goo.gl/S6Ke8M</a>		
<b>Optional Letters Due:</b>	<b>Optional Letter</b> describing your child's learning style is welcomed, though not necessary. We need this letter prior to April 15 so we can consider your input. We do not accept requests for specific teachers or teams.		
<b>Step-Up Day:</b>	<b>Friday, June 10</b>	<b>Oak Hill</b>	<b>11:30-2:15 Lunch @ Oak Hill</b>

**We look forward to working with you!!!**

John Harutunian  
Principal  
617-559-9200  
[John\\_Harutunian@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:John_Harutunian@newton.k12.ma.us)

Jennifer Ames  
Guidance Counselor, Gr. 6  
617-559-9212  
[Jennifer\\_Ames@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:Jennifer_Ames@newton.k12.ma.us)

Amy Geer  
Assistant Principal for Student Services  
617-559-9210  
[Amy\\_Geer@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:Amy_Geer@newton.k12.ma.us)

Doreen Vaglica  
Executive Assistant to the Principal  
617-559-9200  
[Doreen\\_Vaglica@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:Doreen_Vaglica@newton.k12.ma.us)





Bowen
Memorial Spaulding
Zervas

Oak Hill Middle School  
Introduction to Guidance Services

January 25, 2016

Dear Incoming Oak Hill Families,

Welcome to Oak Hill Middle School! We look forward to getting to know your children, and learning about their interests and learning style. We hope this letter will be able to answer some common questions about the guidance department and how we can help your child make the most of his/her middle school years.

Students at Oak Hill stay with the same guidance counselor for three years through the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. We work together with students and parents on a number of levels, and spend time getting to know each student. Counselors work with all the teams of teachers, and meet regularly to discuss team activities, assignments, and sharing of student information. In addition, your child's guidance counselor is a liaison between teachers and home. In addition to our guidance counselors, Alyssa Arzola serves as our METCO Counselor and Amanda Brooks serves as an ELL Liaison. We work in partnership to support all of our students and families.

Here are some of the regular services provided by the guidance counselor:

- Supports all students in their assigned grade.
- Provides individual and group counseling, as well as mediation between students.
- Assists with social, emotional, academic and scheduling issues.
- Meets regularly with teams of teachers to work in supporting students.
- Facilitates IEP and 504 meetings.
- Assists with transitions from elementary and to high school.
- Makes referrals to and consults with community resources (e.g. tutors, outside community agencies, therapists, etc)

We look forward to getting to know your child and to three years of positive partnership with you. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer Ames   Alyssa Arzola   Ariel Bernstein   Amanda Brooks   Katy Oliver*

**For 2016-2017:**

Jennifer Ames	617-559-9212	Grade 6 guidance counselor
Ariel Bernstein	617-559-9213	Grade 7 guidance counselor
Katy Oliver	617-559-9214	Grade 8 guidance counselor
Alyssa Arzola	617-559-9210	Gr. 6-8 METCO Counselor
Amanda Brooks	617-559-9210	Grade 6-8 guidance counselor/ELL Liaison

# Oak Hill Middle School

[www.newton.k12.ma.us/oakhill](http://www.newton.k12.ma.us/oakhill)

Dear Families of Incoming Sixth Grade Families,

We look forward to having you and your child as a member of the Oak Hill Middle School community next year. Below is information about choosing a world language and optional musical ensembles for your child. **Please read this information carefully and then select the courses at our secure online registration link, located on the Oak Hill website. The link will be open from March 3 at 7:30PM through April 11 and 11:00AM. All incoming students must register their preferences by April 11.**

## **World Language**

The choice of a world language is an important decision, as your child will be studying this language for the next three years at Oak Hill. We are pleased to offer three world languages to sixth graders: Chinese, French, and Spanish. All languages meet four times during the six-day cycle. Please read the document about world languages by the Newton Public Schools entitled **“World Languages Instruction at the Middle School Level”** for more information. It can be found on our website under the “Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Information” section.

## **Musical Ensembles**

Extension period takes place in the middle of the day every day of the six-day cycle. During this period, a variety of classes and programs are offered, including band, chorus, orchestra, literacy lab, ELL, and special education support services.

Additionally, four electives are open to all sixth graders during the extension period: **String Orchestra, Chorus, Band, and Bistro Band**. They each meet two times during the six-day cycle.

**If you are interested in taking one or more of these optional ensembles, please register online.**

For more information about these elective choices, please see the **“Musical Ensemble Course Descriptions”** document on our website under the “Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Information” section.

**Note: Special Education and ELL classes will be scheduled later in the spring. Students enrolled in special education and ELL classes may not be able to get their choice for world language or musical ensemble electives due to scheduling constraints.**

Warm Wishes,  
*John Harutunian, Principal*

The **DEADLINE** for Online Course Registration is **Monday, April 11, 2016**.

Please register with this link:  
<https://goo.gl/S6Ke8M>

# Oak Hill Middle School – Musical Ensemble Course Descriptions

(The following courses are all in addition to a one-semester general music class for all sixth graders)

## → Course: **String Orchestra, Grades 6, 7 & 8**

Teacher: Mr. Caleb Cutler                      caleb\_cutler@newton.k12.ma.us

The Orchestra is open to all string players in grades 6, 7, and 8, and to selected piano players. Members of the Orchestra should have been active members of their elementary school ensemble, and are *encouraged* to take regular lessons as well as practice on their instrument. The Orchestra plays a wide variety of music, from classical symphonies to fiddle tunes. The Orchestra performs at the Winter and Spring Concerts, city-wide String Instrument Festivals “String-O-Rama” and String-A-Mania” as well as the MICCA state-wide festival. Members of the Orchestra are encouraged to audition for the All-City Orchestra. *String Orchestra is open to violin, viola, cello, string bass and piano students.* Please contact Mr. Cutler if you have any questions.

- Meets on days 2 and 5 during the 6 day cycle during “Extension”
- String Orchestra meets in the Oak Hill Auditorium.

## → Course: **Chorus, Grade 6**

Teacher: Mr. Caleb Cutler                      caleb\_cutler@newton.k12.ma.us

Students learn a varied repertoire of music from diverse cultures and eras, including music by some of the leading contemporary vocal arrangers. The chorus performs at our Winter and Spring Concerts. There are also many other opportunities for members to perform such as tours, assemblies, in ensembles, and with community groups. Students interested in auditioning for the All-City Chorus must be members of the chorus. All that is required to become a member is a willingness to perform and sing great music! Please contact Mr. Cutler if you have any questions.

- Meets on days 3 and 6 during the 6 day cycle during “Extension”
- Grade 6 Chorus meets in the Oak Hill Auditorium.

## → Course: **Band, Grade 6**

Teacher: Mr. Miller                      roy\_miller@newton.k12.ma.us

The Band is a continuation of music performance and comprehension of the elements of music as they are encountered and communicated through diverse styles of music. Special emphasis is placed on the collaborative work necessary to produce an ensemble product greater than the sum of its parts. This group is comprised primarily of students who have been active members of their elementary school programs. Motivated beginners are welcome with the approval of the director. The group performs at our Winter and Spring Concerts. Instruments played in the band include: Piccolo, flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor sax, baritone sax, trumpet, French horn, trombone, euphonium/baritone horn, percussion, mallet percussion and timpani.

- Meets on days 1 and 4 during the 6 day cycle during “Extension”
- Grade 6 Band meets in the music room.

## → Course: **Bistro Band, Grades 6, 7, 8**

Teacher: Mr. Miller                      roy\_miller@newton.k12.ma.us

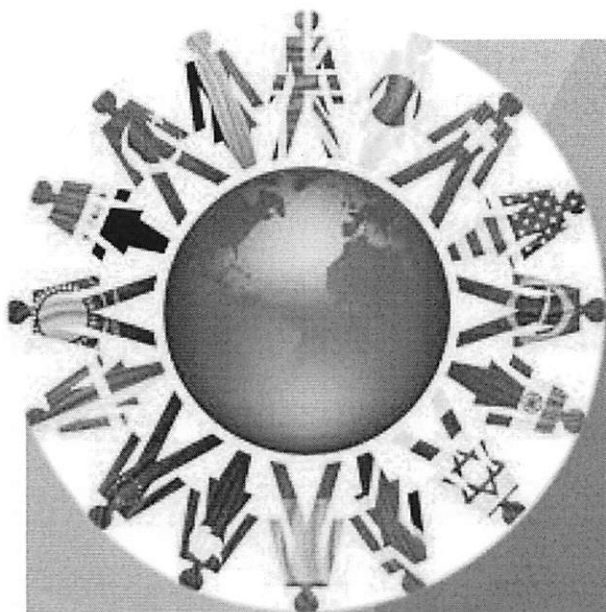
This group is for students who would like more music, and challenge in their Middle School experience. It is open to Grades 6-8 and is in addition to Grade 6 Band above. The group performs at our Winter and Spring Concerts. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Miller.

- Meets on days 2 and 5 during the 6 day cycle during “Extension”
- Grade 6, 7, 8 Bistro Band meets in the music room.

**\*\*Note: Students who want to take Bistro Band must also take regular Band 6\*\***

# Middle School World Languages

Newton Public Schools 2016



## *World Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Today's college or career ready students must be prepared to collaborate and problem solve with people of diverse backgrounds and languages. The study of world languages and cultures helps prepare students to be responsible members of our global society and gives them a competitive advantage in today's global economy.

Learning a world language reinforces understanding of one's first language, develops communicative competence, strengthens reading and writing skills, and opens the door to a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the richness of diverse cultures (MA Foreign Languages Curriculum Framework, 1999). Knowing a language also provides access to authentic literature, music art and culture.

In Newton, we are a community of many languages. There are more than 70 languages other than English spoken by students and community members. Studying a world language helps students maintain family contacts and provides students with the facility to communicate with members of our local and global communities.

## *Selecting a World Language*

The purpose of this pamphlet is to inform families of the world language choices offered at the middle school level so you can make an informed decision. You will also find information on World Language articulation and sequencing, the communicative approach to language teaching, and descriptions of language majors, and electives.





### ***Articulation and Sequencing***

A lengthy, well-articulated, high-quality instructional sequence is essential for the development of proficiency in a world language. Students who begin to study Chinese, French, Italian, or Spanish in grade 6 have the opportunity to study the language through grade 12 at advanced levels. Other options are available to students as well. Students can choose a new language after grade 8 or, they may choose to study two languages at the secondary level. Additionally, at the secondary level students will have opportunities to apply their linguistic and cultural knowledge through participation in international exchange programs offered at each high school.

### ***Heritage Speakers***

Some heritage speakers (students who speak a first language other than English) may choose to follow a sequence that allows them to further develop their first language. This is particularly true for heritage Chinese speakers who may not yet write in their heritage language. Heritage speakers who are already proficient in Spanish, French or Italian are encouraged to try a new language until high school when they can be assessed and placed at an appropriate level.

### ***Communicative Approach to Language Teaching***

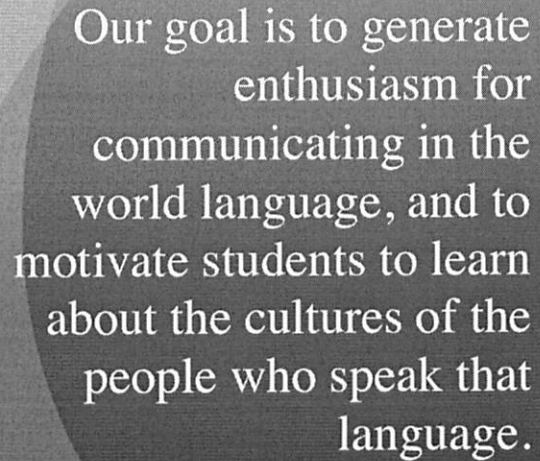
Language instruction has shifted from an almost exclusive focus on the components of language, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, to a focus on the development of communicative proficiency, the ability to communicate in the target language in real-life contexts. This teaching approach aims for a high level of proficiency in the language, with an initial emphasis on developing comprehension, pronunciation and oral language skills.

In a communicative classroom environment, teachers and students use near exclusive target language use for all classroom communication. Students are assessed on their interpretive, interpersonal and presentational language skills as they engage in communication tasks that are authentic or modeled after real-life language use. Students will also understand cultural perspectives; make linguistic and cultural comparisons; use the language to connect to other disciplines; and apply their language skills in their local and global communities.

## ***Middle School Offerings***

All sixth grade students are expected to study a world language as a major subject. Chinese, French, and Spanish are offered at all four middle schools. Italian is offered at Bigelow and Day. Beginning in grade seven, students may elect to study Latin in addition to their language major.

When families choose a world language, they are committing their child for the duration of the student's middle school experience. Three years of middle school modern language study will allow most students to acquire Novice High to Intermediate Low proficiency in their language of study, qualifying them to enter year 2 of our high school language-learning sequence.



Our goal is to generate enthusiasm for communicating in the world language, and to motivate students to learn about the cultures of the people who speak that language.

### ***For Further Information***

For further information about Newton's World Language programs please contact:

***World Language Coordinator, 6-8***  
***Alison Mulligan 617-559-6166***  
*mulligana@newton.k12.ma.us*

***Newton North Department Head, 9-12***  
***Nancy Marrinucci 617-559-6300***  
*marrinuccin@newton.k12.ma.us*

***Newton South Department Head, 9-12***  
***Suzanne Murphy Ferguson 617-559-6601***  
*murphyfergusons@newton.k12.ma.us*

### ***What to Expect***

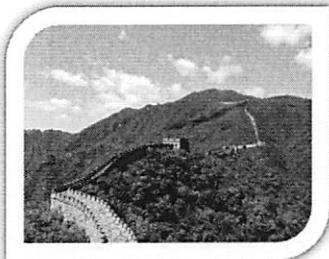
Learning a new language is both fun and challenging. Students should expect to engage in target language use from the moment they enter the classroom. Teachers use a variety of instructional practices and tools to support students in language comprehension and production.

Additionally, students are expected to extend their language learning experience outside of the classroom by engaging in nightly practice at home. Most language programs require that students purchase a workbook of practice exercises in order to participate in regular listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar practice. Students may also be expected to participate in on-line practice activities to strengthen and expand their language skills.



## Language Choices:

If a student entering grade 6 would like to study a language that is not offered at the neighborhood school, then the student's family may elect to apply for an out of district placement to go to a different middle school.



### Chinese

Asia is a global economic and political player, with China representing the world's oldest continuous civilization. Mandarin Chinese instruction reflects Newton's commitment to participation in a multicultural society. Mandarin Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world (over 860 million speakers), with a significant number of speakers in the Greater Boston area, including Newton.



### French

French is more than the language of diplomacy and government; it also provides opportunities in international business, as Paris is the fourth largest financial center in the world. Learning French opens a rich world of literature, art, film, and other cultural activities. French is spoken in France, Canada, West Africa, Haiti, New Orleans, and many other places around the world.



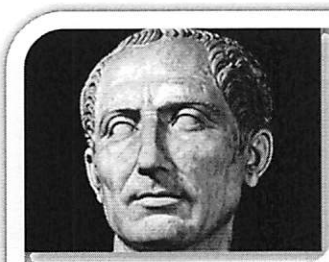
### Italian - Offered at Bigelow and Day

Italy is a major player in the European and world economy. It is a world leader in the culinary arts, interior design, fashion, and more. Italian is spoken throughout the United States, including Newton. It is the language of music, art, literature, film, and food. The study of Italian can create links to family heritage and open opportunities to travel and study abroad.



### Spanish

Spanish is the second most commonly spoken language in the World and in the USA. Its influence will continue to grow in areas of interest to all ages: sports, music, entertainment, for example. The Spanish language is spoken in more than 20 other countries, each with a rich history of literature, art, and cultural activity. Spanish language skills will increase career opportunities in many fields, both at home and abroad.



### Latin

Latin is offered in addition to the study of a modern language beginning in grade 7. Students study basic vocabulary, word order, and begin to read and translate Latin prose. They are also introduced to ancient Rome through the study of daily Roman life, discussion of mythological figures, and an overview of geographical and historical topics. It is well documented that Latin study can strengthen English vocabulary and grammar skills.