

Dear Prospective Families,

The Middle School at Fenn, comprised of sixth and seventh grade, is populated by educators who have a full understanding of the unique nature and needs of young adolescents. The Middle School program at Fenn is a developmentally responsive one where boys are given the chance to grow into scholars, citizens of a democracy, reliable friends and honorable and gentle young men. With the careful guidance of teachers who are committed to the growth and fostering of boys — adolescent boys — our students are supported as they seek to meet the high expectations held for them in all aspects of their life at Fenn.

Middle School students are ready for the challenges that come with a curriculum that is engaging and, in several content areas, integrative. They experience varied teaching and assessment methods that deal with the process of learning as well as with the products of that learning. Boys move from room to room for classes, and they have a different teacher for each subject. The rigor of coursework increases in the middle school years in order to prepare boys for the demands of Upper School and secondary schools. Still, the Middle School day is balanced well to meet the needs of “the whole boy.”

The study of foreign language is introduced in Middle School, and English and Social Studies are combined in an Integrated Studies program. Classes are vibrant and characterized by debate, questioning, and collaboration as students strive for academic excellence. Infused throughout the curriculum is an extensive use of technology to investigate and present. A richness of experience is evident in arts classes as well. In the course of a year, a Middle School student takes Photography, Art, Ceramics, Music, Drama and Woodshop. He may also choose to be a part of Treble Chorus, the Middle School play, Band or any one of a number of the creative and collaborative efforts that abound each year. Similarly, boys may choose to participate in various weekly community service opportunities. Athletics are also an important part of the day. Beginning in Middle School, students choose which sport they would like to play each season. Meeting every day, athletics is both instructional and intramural. It is the goal of the athletic program to promote the growth of young men who understand hard work, teamwork, support, commitment, honesty and healthy, respectful competition.

Helping students through their busy days and providing support to them in their efforts are the caring faculty of the Middle School. The same people who teach the boys are their advisors and their coaches as well. Faculty members have the opportunity to know each boy well and to provide support as he negotiates early adolescence and strives for excellence in an academic environment. Individual relationships between students and adults are characterized by caring and respect. Beyond individual relationships, there is a boy's relationship to our broader community. Meeting every day in All School Meeting, adults and students from Lower, Middle and Upper School have the opportunity to model the shared values of the community. Often, that means translating the school motto, *Sua Sponte*, into daily life. Stories are shared, announcements made and lessons learned about taking responsibility for one's own actions and learning. Middle School boys rise to that guiding principal when given the chance and the support. That is what we strive to do in the Middle School years at Fenn.

Sincerely,

Patricia McCarthy  
Head of the Middle School

# Fenn



## MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:20	ADVISOR	ADVISOR	ADVISOR	ADVISOR	ADVISOR
8:30					
8:33	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
9:18					
9:21	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
10:06					
10:09	<b>3</b> ALL SCHOOL MEETING RECESS	RECESS 10:21 <b>3</b> 10:24	<b>3</b> ALL SCHOOL MEETING RECESS	<b>3</b> ALL SCHOOL MEETING RECESS	<b>3</b> ALL SCHOOL MEETING RECESS
10:51	<b>4</b>	11:09 <b>4</b> 11:12	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
11:36					
11:39	<b>5</b>	11:57 <b>5</b> 12:00	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
12:24					
12:27	<b>6</b> LUNCH	12:50	<b>6</b> LUNCH	<b>6</b> LUNCH	<b>6</b> LUNCH
1:07					
1:10	<b>7</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
1:55					
1:55	<b>8</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
2:35	SPORTS		SPORTS	SPORTS	SPORTS
3:50					

## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

### PHILOSOPHY:

The English program at Fenn is designed to teach boys to read actively and critically, to write effectively and fluently, to speak articulately and confidently, and to appreciate the power and pleasure of literature. The integration of reading and writing is a critical component of the program. A variety of literature that is rich in content, style, and perspective provides a model for the development of written language. Students write in response to reading and develop skills critical to their growth as writers.

### GRADE 6

Sixth-grade English is taught with Social Studies as part of an Integrated Studies program. Students read with a focus toward leadership and heroic characteristics in characters and with an eye for connection to characters, events, and themes. Students read realistic fiction, poetry, and historical fiction. Process writing is taught through the writing of multi-genre pieces such as: journals, short stories, poetry, perspective pieces, expository responses to literature. Oral presentations, discussions and Socratic Seminars foster understanding and participation. Grammar, reading and vocabulary skills are introduced and reviewed through mini lessons and are connected to the writing process.

### Resources

#### Literature

[The Misfits](#), James Howe

[Tangerine](#), Edwin Bloor

[The Place of Lions](#), Eric Campbell

[Locomotion](#), Jacqueline Woodson

Other book selections:

[My Brother Sam is Dead](#), Collier Brothers

[Following Fakeman](#), Barbara Ware Holmes

### GRADE 7

Seventh-grade English and social studies are taught as part of an Integrated Studies program with a focus on American Studies. The course is centered on essential questions about freedom such as “What does it mean to be free?” “Does freedom have costs?” “Should freedom ever be restricted?” Students explore answers to these questions through their reading and writing, using a variety of literary genres and historical texts. Students learn and practice different reading strategies, while recognizing and interpreting elements of literature. Students are introduced to the technical reading skills necessary for careful and discerning research. Expository and creative writing, discussion, oral and visual presentations and Socratic Seminars are integral components of the course. Grammar, editing, and revising are taught and practiced within the context of developing good writing skills.

### Resources

#### Literature

[The Giver](#), Lois Lowry

[Soldier's Heart](#), Gary Paulsen

[Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry](#), Mildred Taylor

[Monster](#), Walter Dean Myers

[Impact](#), (Collection of Short Stories)

[African-American Literature](#), Harcourt,

Brace and Jovanovich

[The People Could Fly](#), (A collection of

African American folktales)

[The King of Mulberry Street](#), Donna Jo

Napoli

[America Street](#), edited by Anne Mazer (a compilation of short stories about the immigrant experience)

[Talking to the Sun](#), poetry and artwork anthology

Teacher-compiled Harlem Renaissance packet of poetry, social commentary, and critical essays

Additional selections of poetry and prose connected to subject matter

## MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

### PHILOSOPHY:

In the mathematics program at Fenn, each boy builds a solid foundation of skills and fundamental concepts so that he can move to increasingly complex material as he goes through the school. Logic, analytical reasoning, conjecture and proof, abstraction and symbolic structure are important cognitive skills that find easy exercise in math but also contribute to each student's overall intellectual growth. In class, teachers and students make connections among mathematical topics and continually expand the body of work with which each boy becomes comfortable. In both oral and written work, teachers employ a variety of approaches in the classroom. Finally, boys are encouraged to listen to each other's ideas, to appreciate different perspectives, and to engage their own senses of curiosity.

### GRADE 6

During the spring term of the previous academic year, math teachers (in consultation with homeroom teachers, Fenn's Learning Specialist and the Mathematics Department Chair), place students according to educational needs in either regular or accelerated sections. The sixth grade mathematics program provides a smooth and gradual transition to a more conceptual and algebraic focus. Visual models, manipulatives, as well as computer software and web sites are incorporated into classroom instruction. Students learn by whole group instruction, small-group instruction, collaborative groups and individual activities in class. Study and organizational skills are taught and utilized.

The curricular focus of the sixth grade includes broad background work in algebra and geometry. Students continue to develop their understanding of numeric operations, measurement, and representing data. Topics in number theory and



*“I have no doubt that Sua Sponte and the Fenn code of ethics has deeply instilled the finest moral and personal values my son could possible hold, values that will be critical to his development both now and in future years.” —Fenn parent*



probability are covered. They intensify their study of algebra working with variables, patterns, functions and sequences. They develop algebraic skills in simplifying expressions, working with fractions and decimals and solving equations. Geometric concepts include symmetry, areas and angle relationships in polygons, similarity and proportion. A final component of the year is an introduction to the coordinate plane and an exploration of basic linear properties.

## Resources

### Textbooks

Passport to Algebra and Geometry, Larsen, Boswell, Kanold, Stiff, McDougal Littell Publishing, 2005

Connected Mathematics Series, Dale Seymour Publications, 1998

### Supplementary Materials

Manipulatives (snap cubes, color tiles, dice)

TI 83 Calculator Classroom Pack, Texas Instruments

Green Glob Software

National Library of Virtual Manipulatives website

## GRADE 7

Academic sectioning continues in the seventh grade to address the varied educational needs of students and the pace at which material is covered. After a careful review of the important tools of arithmetic and geometry introduced in sixth grade, students move on to a more focused look at algebra. Visual and algebraic models are a central part of the course. Students are required to purchase a graphing calculator which is incorporated in the course while computer software and websites continue to be incorporated into classroom instruction. Study and organizational skills continue to be taught and utilized.

Graphing and algebraic skills are a central focus. Students do significant work with the coordinate system and explore such topics as slope, the distance formula, as well as vector and parametric equations

of lines. Students are introduced to functions, function notation, and work with transformations. This course provides the algebraic background for success in an Algebra One curriculum the following year. Some students will complete and master the entire Algebra One curriculum during this year and will be ready for Honors Geometry/Trigonometry in the eighth grade. For each boy, the Department Chair and the student's teacher will make all placement decisions.

## Resources

### Textbooks

Pre-algebra: An Accelerated Course, Dolciani, Sorgenfrey, Graham, Houghton Mifflin 1996

Algebra One Concepts and Skills, Larson, Boswell, Kanold, Stiff, McDougal Littell, 2005

Algebra and Trigonometry, Paul A. Foerster, Addison-Wesley, 1999

### Supplementary Materials

Graphing Calculator

National Library of Virtual Manipulatives - website

Green Glob Software

The Science Department firmly believes that science is best learned by doing, and that science is not a body of knowledge to be mastered, but rather a way of thinking about how we experience the world around us. That philosophy is applied to the content whose breath includes all the domains of science within each academic division.

In science class students will:

Experience the various domains of science

Design and conduct scientific experiments

Develop the skills needed to accurately interpret scientific data

Communicate the results of experiments in a clear fashion

Convey an understanding of the experimental process in an effective manner

## GRADE 6

Sixth-grade science focuses applied concepts of Physical Science to Life Science and Earth Science content. During the sixth grade year, students explore the topics of ecosystems, the water cycle and birds. Through the examination of these three topics, students are exposed to all the domains of science.

At the beginning of the year, students use the campus in their study of ecosystems. They learn to identify the flora and fauna present on the campus and learn ecological concepts, such as food webs and invasive species. From their research they determine which species of birds would use our campus as a habitat. They then design and build a bird box for that bird. Students also grow plants and conduct hands on experiments to learn about photosynthesis and life cycles.

With the water cycle as a unifying theme, the students study the following topics: general characteristics of water, weather, groundwater, and ponds. Students conduct hands-on experiments to learn about properties of water, such as evaporation, condensation and transpiration. During the weather unit, students utilize online resources to make daily obser-

## SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

### PHILOSOPHY:

The overarching goals of Fenn's Science Program are as follows:

Students will understand the process of science, be grounded in the domains of science, apply skills and content to the world around them, and develop a respect, appreciation, and enthusiasm for the natural sciences.

The science program is designed to provide opportunities for the student to experience growth in a variety of thinking skills and be exposed to each domain of science: life science, physical science, earth and space science, and technology and engineering. All courses in the Science Department are activity and laboratory oriented and

variations and track storms through satellite images. Students construct a model of a classic nor'easter on a four-part color transparency. This model is used to examine wind patterns, pressure gradients, cloud types, and storm tracking.

Groundwater contamination is studied using a simulation called "Concord-vale." Students take the role of a company drilling test wells to map out the groundwater contamination of an imaginary town. The boys examine pond life with hand lenses and stereo microscopes. Students learn to identify many of the common organisms and learn about their place within the pond's food web. In keeping with the philosophy of the department, students are given many opportunities to actively participate in learning.

Birds are the other main topic included in the sixth-grade curriculum. The unit has two main goals. The first is to make students aware of the variety of birds in the local area. Students make regular observations of the school's bird feeders and examine the campus for different bird habitats, including the school's own professionally-designed bird sanctuary.

The second goal of the bird unit is to have students learn about bird biology and the important role birds play in the environment. Through the "Create a Bird" project, students select and research a biome and then create a possible bird to fit into a selected niche within a food web. Students learn bird anatomy and then choose a bird which fits in well with the characteristics of the biome and food chain being studied.

## Resources

### Books

[Weather & Climate](#), Prentice Hall Explorer  
[Everything You Never Learned About Birds](#),

Rebecca Rupp

[How Birds Work](#), Ron Freethy

[Birdwatching for All Ages](#), Jorie Hunken

[Focus on Birds](#), A. Ganeri

[Field GuideBooks](#), Roger Tory Peterson.

[A Field Guide to Wildlife Habitats](#), Janine

Bengus

[How Weather Works](#), Rob Demillo

[Practical Weather Forecasting](#), Frank

Mitchell-Christie

[The Weather Book](#), Jack Williams

[The Weather Report](#), Mike Graf

[Classroom Feeder Watch](#), TERC

[Skeleton](#), Eyewitness Books

[Pond and River](#), Eyewitness Books

### Technology

"Birds," Eyewitness Video

Computers

LCD projector

## GRADE 7

Seventh grade science is a Physical Science course that integrates a strong technology and engineering component. Electricity and related topics are examined through the inquiry method of learning in the seventh-grade year. Initially, the students take an historical look at the evolution of the Atomic Model. After they have learned the structure of the atom and subatomic particles, including the electron, they work in cooperative groups to complete a web-based research project on the Periodic Table of Elements entitled "What are the 6 most important elements?"

Students "discover" many of the concepts related to static electricity through a series of inquiry-based activities, including the construction of Leyden jars and experiments with an electroscope. The unit concludes with the use of the Van de Graaff generator.

The second form of electricity studied is electrochemical. Through a series of experiments, the students test all of the variables of an electrochemical cell or "wet cell." These hands-on experiments help the students become experts about the factors that produce a more effective wet cell. Students then use their expertise to custom design wet cells to conform to specific requirements.

Students use both the research skills gained in the Periodic Table of Element research unit and the experimental skills learned in the Wet Cell unit to complete the electromagnet unit. Working in cooperative

groups, students create as strong an electromagnet as they can within strict specifications. Each group must use their acquired skills to direct their own sequence of experiments, testing the variables affecting the strength of electromagnets.

Students become familiar with the use of terms such as: voltage, amperage, resistance, watts, and kilowatt-hours. Time is spent building and testing circuits and electromagnetic fields. Students learn about a variety of related topics including AC and DC currents, transformers, and motors. By the end of the year, students can trace the flow of electricity from where it is generated, through the entire power grid, to where it is being used. Throughout the year they gain skills in notetaking and writing lab reports.

## Resources

### Books

Safe and Simple Electrical Experiments,

Rudolf F. Graf

[The Story of Electricity](#), George deLucenay

[Physical Science: Concepts in Action](#),

Prentice-Hall, Inc.

[The Thomas Edison Book of Easy and](#)

[Incredible Experiments](#), The Thomas

Alva Edison Foundation, John Wiley &

Sons, Inc. New York. 1988

### Hardware

Computers

LCD projector

Multi-meters

DC Power Sources

Wet Cell materials

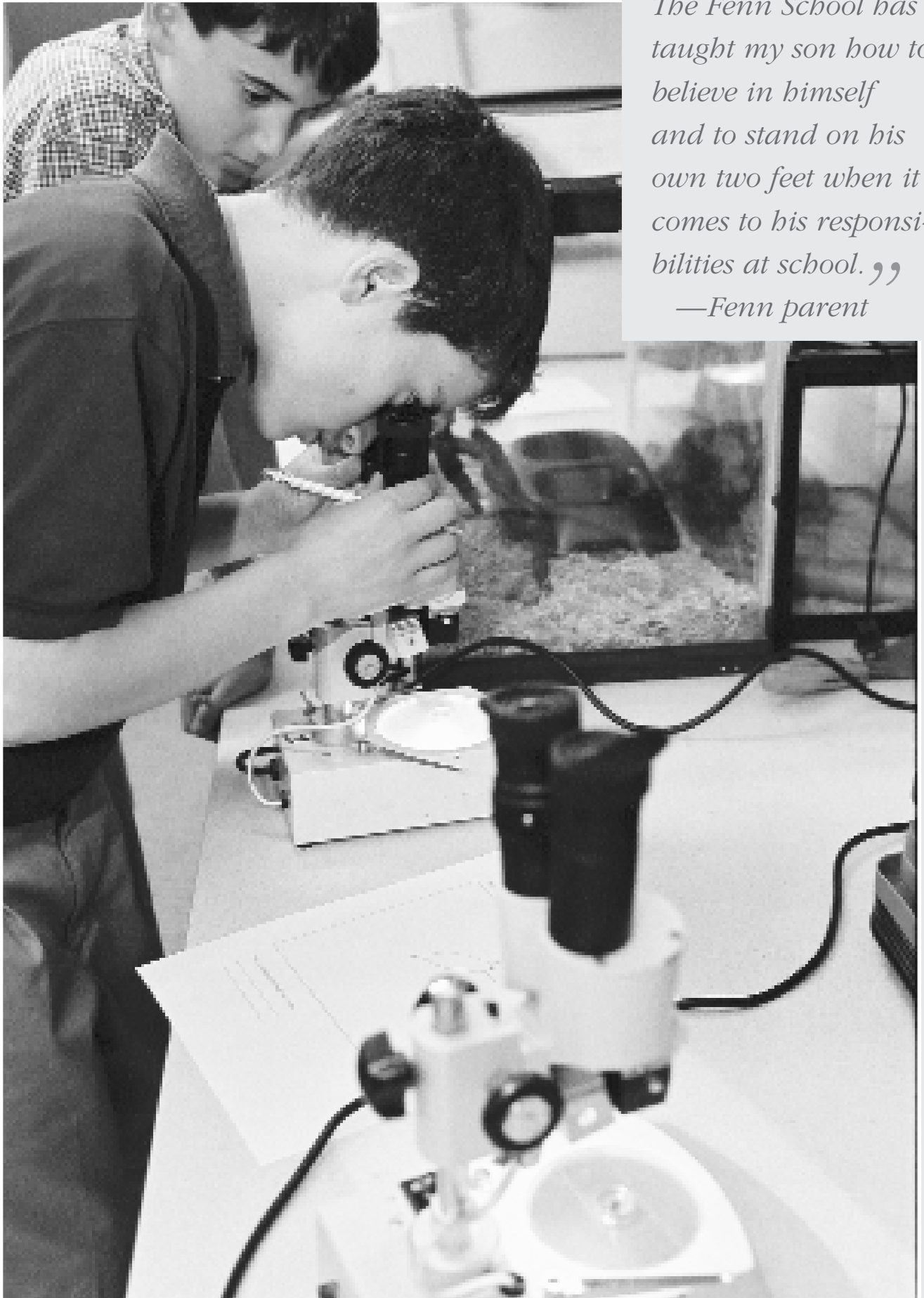
Electromagnetic material

## SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

### PHILOSOPHY:

The Social Studies curriculum teaches students that they are part of a greater community, nation, and world. Through their study of a variety of primary and secondary

*“The Fenn School has taught my son how to believe in himself and to stand on his own two feet when it comes to his responsibilities at school.”*  
—Fenn parent



sources and exposure to different ways of learning, students are empowered to think, speak, and write critically. The goal of the department is that boys will develop curiosity about history and current events with a respect for diverse cultures, past and present.

The Social Studies program at Fenn is designed to teach boys to be able to:

- Think critically
- Evaluate and synthesize information
- Acquire, organize and use information from using a variety of sources
- Write analytically using text evidence
- Discover the world through geography
- Appreciate history and the forces that shape civilizations
- Understand cause and effect in world events

## GRADE 6

Sixth-grade Social Studies is taught with English as part of Integrated Studies.

The program encompasses three distinct units: the Age of Exploration, European Colonization of America (which highlights the Salem Witch Hysteria), and the American Revolution. Leadership is emphasized through two essential questions: What qualities make a good leader? How will I know when I am ready to emerge as a leader? Boys read a variety of secondary source materials, are exposed to selected note-taking strategies, and concentrate on refining the skills of answering short-answer questions. There are several research projects throughout the year. In the fall, boys complete a first-person journal of an historical or current explorer. Boys work collaboratively to create a Powerpoint Presentation covering research on the Salem Witch Hysteria. In the spring, they complete a Revolutionary War research project. Oral presentations are incorporated into the curriculum to emphasize the importance of strong speaking skills. Field trips include day trips to Salem, Boston, Lexington and Concord.

## Resources

### Non-Fiction

- [You are the Explorer](#), Nathan Aaseng
- [Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World](#), Jennifer Armstrong
- [Making the Thirteen Colonies](#), Joy Hakim
- [From Colonies to Country](#), Joy Hakim
- [The Salem Witchcraft Trials in American History](#), David Fremon

### Fiction

- [My Brother Sam is Dead](#), Christopher Collier and James Lincoln Collier

### Videos

- "The Explorers: A Century of Discovery," National Geographic, 1988.
- "Three Sovereigns For Sarah," Night Owl Productions, 1988.
- "Liberty, The American Revolution," PBS Video, 1997
- "Days of Judgement: The Salem Witch Trials of 1692," Peabody and Essex Museum, 1993

## GRADE 7

Seventh-grade English and Social Studies are taught as part of an Integrated Studies program. The course is centered on the essential question, "What does it mean to be free?" Through literature, memoirs, poetry, biography and non-fiction sources, the students examine the African-American experience from slavery through the Civil Rights Movement, the Civil War, the Reconstruction, immigration, and present-day issues in a diverse America. Students have ample opportunities to practice different aspects of the research process. Individually and in cooperative groups, students study, analyze and present using written, oral and multi-media formats. Print, visual and Internet resources are all used to complete these tasks. A highlight of the year is the Family Cultural History Project, which allows each student to research an aspect of his own culture and prepare a booth to be displayed at the Cultural Heritage Fair.

## Resources

### Textbook

- [A More Perfect Union](#), Houghton Mifflin, 1991.

### Secondary Sources

- [To Be A Slave](#), Julius Lester
- [Freedom's Children](#), Velma Maia Thomas

### Excerpts from:

- [The Boys' War](#), Jim Murphy
- [War, Terrible War](#), Joy Hakim
- [Reconstruction and Reform](#), Joy Hakim
- [The Emancipation Proclamation](#), James Tackach
- Harlem Renaissance, Immigration and Civil Rights movement reading packets compiled by teacher, updated 2007

### Videos

- "Africans in America," PBS
- "The Civil War," Ken Burns
- "Eyes On The Prize," PBS
- "Emmett Till," PBS
- "Glory: The 54th Regiment, Massachusetts"
- "Jim Crow," The National History Channel
- "The Vernon John's Story: The Road to Freedom," True Stories Collection

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

### PHILOSOPHY:

Spanish is an extraordinarily rich and beautiful language spoken in many parts of the world. Learning Spanish leads to an increased awareness, understanding, and acceptance of other languages and cultures of the world, as well as an increased understanding of one's own language and culture.

The main goals of the Modern Language Department are to:

- Teach students the language skills and discipline necessary to learn and use Spanish, as well as any other foreign languages they may study in the future.
- Arouse students' interest, curiosity, and acceptance of different peoples and cultures around the world.

- Develop students' listening comprehension skills.
- Help students learn about the history, culture, geography and people of Spanish-speaking countries.
- Help students enunciate words, speak in sentences, and communicate effectively in Spanish.
- Help students read and correctly use Spanish grammar.
- Increase students' enjoyment and appreciation of the culture, friendships, and travel in Spanish-speaking countries.

## GRADE 6

Sixth graders participate in an Introduction to Languages course. This course is designed to introduce the students to both Latin and Spanish. This course is offered to all sixth graders in the first term, and it consists of 5 weeks focusing on Spanish language and culture and 5 weeks focusing on Latin language and Roman civilization. At the end of this course the students will have the opportunity to select which language they want to pursue for the remainder of their years at Fenn.

The Spanish segment of the Introduction to Languages course focuses on the four major areas of language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading and writing. During this introductory course the students work in a practical context, learning vocabulary and the basic elements of grammar. In addition to the studies of the language, students learn about the traditions and history of Spanish speaking countries.

### Resources

#### Book

Sixth-grade book with teacher generated and assembled materials; grammar, songs, poems and other materials pertaining to the course.

## GRADE 7

Seventh-grade Spanish meets four times per week, and the class is grouped heterogeneously.

The focus of the program lies in developing the student's ability to communicate in the Spanish language using different tools; conversation, grammatical structures (including communication in the present, past, future tense), and a rich vocabulary that will empower the student to become an active and creative user of the Spanish language.

The textbook *Paso a Paso* integrates grammar and cultural aspects of Spanish. The program is accompanied by audio and video activities as well as music, poetry, short stories and folk tales of Spanish-speaking countries.

### Resources

#### Textbook

*Paso a Paso*, Prentice Hall

#### Other Resources

Video and audio tapes

Seventh-grade "folder" with teacher generated and assembled materials; grammar, songs, poems and other materials pertaining to the course.

## LATIN DEPARTMENT

### PHILOSOPHY:

Latin is the language which is at the root of many languages, including English.

The cultural achievements of the ancient Romans who spoke it have contributed significantly to American life, especially in the areas of art, architecture, political thought and engineering.

The philosophy of the Latin program at Fenn is to prepare students for reading Latin with ease, understanding and enjoyment.

The main goals of the program are to offer students the opportunity to:

- Pursue with enthusiasm the language written and spoken by the ancient Romans.

- Study a language that can be learned more through reading than through speaking.

- Develop good strategies and organizational techniques for mastering the grammar and vocabulary of Latin and other world languages.
- Expand their understanding of English grammar and vocabulary.
- Appreciate those aspects of their cultural background as Americans which they inherit from the ancient Romans (and Greeks).

## GRADE 6

Sixth graders participate in an Introduction to Languages course. This course is designed to introduce the students to both Latin and Spanish. This course is offered to all sixth graders in the first term, and it consists of 5 weeks focusing on Spanish language and culture and 5 weeks focusing on Latin language and Roman civilization. At the end of this course the students will have the opportunity to select which language they want to pursue for the remainder of their years at Fenn.

In the Latin portion of the course, students learn a basic vocabulary of about 150 words, the importance of word endings to determine the context and meaning of a Latin sentence, some basic patterns of English grammar and, through background readings and small projects, a great deal about life as it was lived in ancient Rome and surrounding provinces. If a boy continues in Latin, the remainder of the sixth grade will study a Roman province in Britannia. The students will continue to learn the basic grammar of the Latin language. By the end of the year, they will have a working vocabulary of about 500 words. They will also have learned 3 cases (nominative, accusative, ablative) and their uses in the Latin sentence.

### Resources

Student Workbook  
Oxford Latin Course Book I



*“The Fenn School is the first bumper sticker I have ever put on my car! Fenn sees the potential in all kinds of boys and helps them discover just who they can be.” —Fenn parent*



## GRADE 7

Seventh graders who elect to continue studying Latin are grouped heterogeneously and meet four times per week for the full year. The grammatical focus of the new seventh-grade program includes mastery of the basic forms of the language, development of a good Latin vocabulary base, and gaining an understanding of the relationship between Latin words and English vocabulary. Students read short adapted stories in Latin about events such as the Trojan War. The cultural dimension of the program includes aspects of classical mythology. The text is a more traditional one than that used in the sixth-grade program.

### *Resources*

Oxford Latin Course Book I  
Oxford Latin Course Book II

## ARTS DEPARTMENT

### **PHILOSOPHY:**

A Fenn education is about self-discovery. Boys come to know themselves as students, athletes, and, through the Arts Program, as artists. At Fenn they have wonderful opportunities to discover and develop their aesthetic nature. The worlds of art, drama, and music come alive for boys as they develop their own unique skills as well as an appreciation for the work of all artists.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL ARTS

The Middle School Arts program continues with the four core arts classes offered in the Lower School, with additional courses in Ceramics and Photography. Students take two courses each trimester. This complement of six required courses provides a rich background for the greater variety of courses available in the Upper School Arts program.

## ART STUDIO

### GRADE 6

Sixth graders increase their academic knowledge of art and their observational skills through continued exposure to the various schools of art, such as surrealism, abstract art, Dadaism and impressionism. Students become familiar with the names and works of famous influential artists from various cultural, ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds. Some of the artists are Horace Pippin, Edvard Munch, Jackson Pollack, Diego Rivera, Pablo Picasso and others. After learning to identify famous works and styles through observation of slides, videos and discussions, students choose their favorite surrealists and do a class presentation.

Drawing exercises include introductory work in perspective and proportion by sketching from nature. As practicing artists, students focus on the basic elements of art. They study the function and force of color initially through monochromatic painting and then by experimenting with contrast, balance, and mood.

Students are encouraged to use their paintings to make personal statements, just as famous painters do. Working with the color wheel teaches students how colors react with each other.

Finished pieces are exhibited in class, the Kane Gallery and Robb Hall. Students routinely visit the Concord Art Association, Emerson Umbrella, and pertinent art exhibitions in Concord.

### GRADE 7

The seventh-grade art course builds upon the students' knowledge of artists and styles developed in the sixth grade. In this more ambitious and focused course, students are encouraged to consider the strengths and weaknesses of artists like Picasso, Cezanne, Pollock, and Munch.

In particular, students' knowledge of American art is expanded by studying the styles of artists such as Milton Avery, Frank Stella, Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles White and

Jacob Lawrence. Following a review of famous artists, students are asked to select and study a major artist and his or her style with the intention of creating a painting incorporating some aspects of the chosen artist's style. In preparation for this project, students review exercises in perspective, light and shadow, and receive more advanced instruction in the use of tertiary and secondary colors. Students also begin to develop keen eyes and critical thinking skills. These exercises emphasize the powerful contributions of Art to social change and revolution. They introduce students to the importance of human experience across many cultures. Students will discuss and evaluate the contributions of artists of various ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds during this process.

Finished works are displayed in the Kane Gallery, Robb Hall and other parts of the school. All seventh-grade students routinely visit the Concord Art Association, the Emerson Umbrella and other museums and exhibition centers of Concord.

### *Resources*

Visits to museums: DeCordova Museum, Museum of Fine Arts in Boston  
Visits to artists' studios at the Emerson Umbrella Center for the Arts  
Videos and slide shows on Art History and Appreciation  
Visits to Exhibitions: Concord Art Association, Emerson Umbrella Center for the Arts  
Art Magazines and books  
Art Websites

## CERAMICS

### GRADE 6

Clay is a magical medium. With that in mind, sixth graders are exposed to its spiritual and evocative qualities. They initially spend time playing with the clay, learning how far to push it and the limits of its capabilities. Through various exercises, an

effort is made to enable the students to express themselves through clay without seeking perfection.

Once they are familiar with the medium, students continue by studying shapes and learning how they are combined to create sculptures. During the course of the term, sixth graders learn several handbuilding techniques that they use to create one major piece. It may be an imaginary creature (after being introduced to Gothic architecture's ornamental sculptures), or possibly a fanciful shoe (created for the needs of a particular character). At times we create birdhouses in synergy with the science curriculum. Whatever the focus of the work, the skills of handbuilding are emphasized along with creativity.

Each piece is glazed, fired twice and displayed in the Kane Gallery or in another location in the school for the whole community to enjoy.

## GRADE 7

Students in the seventh grade continue to learn and refine the handbuilding techniques they learned in the sixth grade, as well as developing new skills. They explore the use of the clay extruder and slab roller, two pieces of equipment in the clay studio.

The class uses these skills and equipment to create fanciful, eccentric teapots. Prior to beginning, the students view slides and pictures of many teapots designed by clay artists around the world. Taking the teapot concept to the extreme allows the students unlimited opportunity to challenge themselves with design issues and handbuilding techniques. Some teapots are presented in the shape of an animal or person, others have been geometric in style. No two have ever been the same!

The boys begin by drawing their ideas, sketching them in clay and then proceeding to the actual piece. The work is glazed and fired. When time permits, some students create a tea cup which has some relationship to the teapot. All students' work is prominently displayed in the Kane Gallery.

There are classroom discussions and critiques at the conclusion of the term.

## Resources

### Books

Sculpting Clay, Leon Nigrosh  
Handbuilding Ceramic Forms,

Elsbeth S. Woody

The Spirit of Clay, Robert Piepenburg

Nightmares in the Sky, Stephen King

Generations in Clay, Alfred Dinert, Jr.

and Fred Plog

The Eccentric Teapot, Garth Clark

Faces on Places, Suzanne Haldane

The Big Book of Ceramics,

Joaquin Chavarria

Shoes, Linda O'Keeffe

### Periodicals

"Ceramic Monthly"

"School Arts"

### Videos and Slides

## DRAMA

## GRADE 6

The sixth-grade drama program introduces students to the works and words of William Shakespeare. Through literature, film and a CD-ROM entitled "Discovering Shakespeare," students learn historical background information about Shakespeare and his time. All students participate in scenes from one of two well-known plays, Hamlet or Julius Caesar. The scripts are adaptations that allow students to become familiar and "friendly" with Shakespearean language, characters, and plots. The workshop atmosphere of the class allows students to problem-solve and to work as an ensemble in getting to know the language, characters, and plots of the plays.

Behind the curtain, students are encouraged to design their own abstract set using simple black boxes and ramps, and to assist fellow actors as stage crew members when necessary.

In front of the curtain, acting skills from the Lower School program are reviewed and reinforced. Students improve their skills in developing a character, staying focused and "in character," listening, line

delivery and memorization, and stage movement.

Sixth-grade students present their finished product to an audience of parents and sixth-grade class members.

## Resources

### Books

A Child's Portrait of Shakespeare, Lois Burdett

Stories from Shakespeare, Longman Series

Stories from Shakespeare,

Geraldine McCaughlin

Shakespeare Alive, Virginia Byrne

(Teacher Handbook)

### Play Adaptations:

"Shake Hands with Shakespeare," Albert

Cullum (Hamlet, Julius Caesar)

Abridged "Hamlet," Leon Garfield

"Julius Caesar," Diana Steward

### Audio/Visual

"William Shakespeare: Background for His Works," Coronet Film and Video

"Discovering Shakespeare, An Interactive Journey Through Shakespeare's Life and Times," CD-ROM

## GRADE 7

As the last required year of drama for every student, our seventh-grade curriculum is structured to give the maximum amount of opportunity and personal attention to each student. Seventh graders work in small groups, duos, trios or quads, using scripts chosen from a varied collection of theatrical literature. Every student has a significant role.

The course begins with improvisations focusing on the emotional nature of some of the more dramatic scripts, such as rejection, sorrow, or anger. Once groups have been formed and roles assigned, students develop their characters through discussions addressing acting issues such as emotional circumstances of their characters, their physical characterization, and their possible motivations. Students are encouraged to draw upon incidents from their own lives in order to create realistic, truthful, and spontaneous characterizations.



*“I am always inspired as I watch the boys begin to understand the underlying meanings in books, relate to themes, begin to recognize what good writing is and then be able to talk about the characters as though they have actually met them.” —Fenn teacher*



*“It’s in your hands at Fenn to have integrity—to do the right thing when no one is looking. That’s what makes this a safe, caring environment.”  
—Fenn 7th grader*



Student actors are involved in the staging of their own scenes, and also serve a stage crew members and lighting technicians for other student scenes. The finished scenes are performed publicly in one of Fenn's Performing Arts Showcases, presented in the fall, winter, and spring of every year.

Time permitting, students research and present short reports on an American playwright using resources in the library, including texts and the Internet.

## Resources

### Books

A Practical Handbook for the Actor,

Melissa Bruder et al

Respect for Acting, Uta Hagen

Active Acting, Leslie Abbott

On Acting, Sanford Meisner

The Young Actors' Workbook,

Judith Roberts Seto

Improvisation for the Theatre, Viola Spolin

### Scene Sources

Film Scenes for Actors, Joshua Karton

Modern American Scenes for Student

Actors, Wynn Handman

Scenes for Young Actors, Lorraine Cohen

Thirty Famous One-Act Plays, Bennett Cerf

et al

Great Scenes from the World Theatre,

James L. Steffensen, Jr.

The Actor's Scenebook, Vol. II,

Michael Schulman and Eva Mekler

Contemporary Scenes for Student Actors,

Michael Schulman and Eva Mekler

24 Favorite One-Act Plays, Bennett Cerf et al

Plays from the Contemporary American

Theatre, Brooks McNamara

Also, any appropriate excerpts from one-act,

full-length, or musical plays as well as

approved scenes submitted by students

Character Biography Sheets

## MUSIC

### GRADE 6

Sixth-grade music students build upon skills and knowledge acquired in the Lower School program.

The application of musical knowledge is achieved through several projects.

Students employ their rhythm skills to create computer-generated rhythm compositions using the program "Master Trax Pro." Games to reinforce note values, note names, and meter are introduced.

Vocal music continues to be part of the program. The boys learn the choral music for one concert per year and perform during an evening student showcase.

### GRADE 7

Seventh-grade music students study the evolution of western musical styles over 1000 years. Beginning music history with the origins of Western musical notation, the boys study Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and twentieth-century musical forms. The boys learn about chant, and people such as Pope Gregory and Hildegard von Bingen early in the term.

The English round "Sumer is icumen in" brings the class to the development of polyphony and the Renaissance. Both sacred and secular forms are discussed, including Mass settings, madrigals, lute songs, and instrumental pieces. The medieval banquet lesson recreates the music, instruments, customs, and recipes of Tudor England.

Boys trace the evolution of early opera and oratorio during the Baroque unit. Terms such as aria, recitative, chorus, solo, and duet are discussed. Boys listen to Handel's oratorio "Israel in Egypt" to understand the relationship between text and music. They also compose harmonizations of the Pachelbel Canon bass line using the MIDI program "Encore." Purcell, Vivaldi, and Bach may be discussed.

The video "Amadeus" is shown to illustrate the life of Mozart and music of the

Classical period. A follow-up discussion and Internet research follow the viewing, at which point boys begin to differentiate between the facts of Mozart's and Salieri's life and the characterizations depicted by Schaffer's screenplay.

After a short discussion of Romantic and twentieth-century art music, the class moves on to American popular music. Ragtime, jazz, '50s doo-wop, '60s protest and folk, heavy metal, disco, hip hop, and rap are among the genres we may explore.

## Resources

### Books

Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History

of Rock and Roll, Ed Ward et al

Illustrated Lives of the Composers Series

The Oxford History Book of Music

The Christmas Revels Songbook

Music and You (Textbook series)

### Videos

"Marsalis on Music" series

"My Generation," History of Rock series

"Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra,"

Peter Ustinov

Classical Composers series

"Leonard Bernstein's Young People's

Concerts"

### Vocal Music

A variety of folk, classical, world, jazz and popular music forms from a variety of sources (collections, anthologies, octavos)

### CD-Rom

"History of Music," Vols. I and II

"Music and Culture"

"Musical Instruments"

### Computer Software

"Encore" (MIDI composition program)

## PHOTOGRAPHY

### GRADE 6

The sixth-grade photography course starts with a video and lecture on the history of photography, beginning in Paris where the first permanent photograph was produced in 1839. The students are introduced to the significant people and technical processes that are credited with transforming photography from a recording and documenting tool to the art form that we know today.

The class then studies the manual operation and basic maintenance of the 35mm camera, which includes determining the proper shutter speed, aperture and depth of field for their subjects. The primary subject matter is selected by the students and includes, but is not limited to, landscape, architecture, portraiture, still life and sports photography. The emphasis at this point is on proper exposure, thoughtful composition and understanding the quality and subtlety of existing light.

Once the students have completed shooting their first roll of black and white film, they begin the darkroom phase of the class where the film is processed into negatives and the negatives are transformed into prints, all of which is done by hand. At this point students begin classroom discussions that include solving technical difficulties, referring to the photo library for ideas or inspiration, and critiquing each other's work.

During the latter part of the term, the students are introduced to the basics of digital imaging. They are given the opportunity to use digital cameras, scanners, CD burners and photo quality printers to produce and manipulate images using the program Adobe PhotoShop. Students' finished prints are displayed in the classroom, around the school and in the Kane Gallery and Robb Hall lobby.

With the completion of the sixth grade curriculum, students have a solid foundation in photography and are ready for the challenges presented by the seventh-grade program.

### GRADE 7

The seventh-grade photography course begins with a brief review of the 35mm camera and the technical procedures in the darkroom. The students then begin selecting their subject matter with a goal of refining their camera skills, cultivating an eye for composition and learning to convey what they see and feel through their photographs. Classroom discussions of technique and critiques of student work are more frequent during the seventh grade. Darkroom techniques and procedures are more advanced, and students concentrate on producing more refined "finished" prints.

As in the sixth grade, digital imaging is offered in the latter part of the term. More time is devoted to the process of producing and manipulating multiple images, as well as exploring the complexities of imaging programs such as Adobe Photoshop. Students' finished prints are displayed in the classroom, around the school and in the Kane Gallery and Robb Hall lobby.

### Resources

#### Books

Photography library, including texts on the history of photography and photographic techniques

#### Equipment and Supplies

35mm cameras and tripods, assorted lenses, electronic flash, tripods, filters, photographic enlargers, timers, polycarbonate filters, grain magnifiers, contact printers, enlarging easels, copy stand, studio lights, mounting press, drum print washer, negative dryer, black and white film, assorted black and white photo paper, black and white photo chemicals, assorted print trays, print tongs, measuring beakers, thermometers, film processing canisters and reels.

#### Computer photo programs

## WOODSHOP

### GRADE 6

**The Six Board Chest:** Building a place to put things.

Aside from the wheelbarrow glazed with rainwater, nothing is as common and useful as the six board chest. In building our chest we delve further into the ways wood can be joined together. Students are encouraged to come up with a design that answers the need they have—anything from a jewelry box to a blanket chest.

### GRADE 7

**Structure:** We study basic structure and after building a replica of a nineteenth-century portable drafting table we design and build a model bridge out of balsa wood. Students learn to draw a three-view plan and basic modeling skills.

### Resources

#### Books

Carving Totem Poles and Masks,

Alan Bridgewater

Walden, Henry David Thoreau

How to Carve Wood, Richard Butz

Tagé Fried Teaches Woodworking –

Fine Woodworking

The Complete Guide to Sharpening Tools,

Leonard Lee

Create Your Own Stage Sets, Terry Thomas

The Dory Boat, John Gardner

Songbird Carving, Roslyn Daisey

Making Rocking Horses, Anthony Dew

Rustic Furniture Companion, Daniel Mack

#### Publications

"Fine Woodworking"

"Fine Homebuilding"

"Wooden Boat"

Shop Drawings of Shaker Furniture

## STUDENT LIFE DEPARTMENT

### PHILOSOPHY:

The Fenn Student Life Program is designed to support and nurture boys as they grow and mature during their preadolescent and early adolescent years at Fenn. In support of the School's mission, the Student Life Program reinforces the values of honesty, respect, empathy and courage. The curriculum strives to enable Fenn students to understand and engage successfully the social, emotional and physical challenges and changes of their pre and early adolescent years. It does so by developing boys' self-confidence, expanding their self-awareness, deepening their understanding and acceptance of others, and promoting a sound knowledge of the physical, emotional and social development tasks of this period in their lives bridging boyhood to manhood.

### GRADE 6

The Student Life curriculum provides boys with information, skills and guidance to help them as they enter middle school and adolescence. It reviews the social, emotional and physical changes and challenges that they will experience, and offers a forum for discussion of these issues. In the Fall term, the focus of the sixth-grade course is on responsible decision making, social relationships and conflict resolution. The Winter and most of the Spring term are devoted to dealing with puberty and sexual development, including human reproduction and sexual identity. A final unit in the Spring term focuses on responsible decision making in adolescence.

### GRADE 7

Seventh-grade Student Life continues to provide students with essential information, skills and guidance relating to the emotional and physical challenges that they will experience in Middle School and adolescence. Students study the theory and reality of adolescent development. The cur-

riculum offers a forum in which to discuss current climate and events within the school and the world. Finally, the curriculum aims at arming soon-to-be Upper Schoolers with social, emotional and learning resources so that they continue to make healthy choices throughout their teenage years. During the Fall term, the students will explore forming relationships and coping with difference as well as respect for classmates. The Winter term focuses on creating a healthy lifestyle and learning about health issues and how the media and advertising influence our society. The Spring term centers around decision making, using real-life situations to help students be aware of how to resolve conflict and to make healthy choices in one's own life. It includes both a human sexuality component and a substance abuse component.

## ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

The Fenn School athletic program promotes athletic competence, confidence and enjoyment for students of varying athletic abilities and interests. It stresses learning and practice of individual and team skills, and it offers a variety of individual and team activities with various levels of competition. At all levels, good sportsmanship is stressed as the primary lesson that can be learned from a well-organized athletic program.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS

The sixth and seventh-grade sports program is based on intramural competition and stresses fundamental skills and team play. Boys choose a team sport to play in each of the three school terms, and compete on intramural teams. Offerings include football and soccer in the fall; basketball, ice hockey, and wrestling in the winter; and baseball, lacrosse and tennis in the spring.

It is Fenn's policy that a gifted seventh grader, who meets all criteria and is a

satisfactory citizen, may play on a Varsity, or sometimes Junior Varsity, team. Only seventh graders who will be significant contributors at the top level of the team are selected. An extraordinary sixth-grade athlete whose needs, in Fenn's view, will be better met on a Varsity team may have the opportunity to play up if the Fenn Athletic Committee deems it appropriate.

At all levels, effort grades are given in sports to emphasize how hard one tries, as opposed to how well one does.