

## **2015-2016 Middle School Science Acceleration Program Otselic Valley Central School District Science Department**

### **Traditional Pathway:**

Students in grades 5-8 begin their science investigations with age appropriate coursework that focuses on select areas of Physical Science, Earth Science and Life Science. Upon entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade, these students are integrated with 8<sup>th</sup> grade and together have alternating curriculums taught of Physical & Earth Science or Life Science. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students are required to participate in the NYS Intermediate Science Performance and Written Assessment which encompasses science content from grade 5 through grade 8.

### **New Accelerated Pathway:**

The O.V. C.S. and the Science Department are now offering to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, two accelerated Regents science courses which will be alternating yearly. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Regents courses are Living Environment (Biology) or Earth Science. By accelerating in science, some students will have one of their graduation requirements for science completed before entering high school.

### **What are the advantages of an accelerated science program?**

- Regents level science courses in 8<sup>th</sup> grade are designed for students that are highly motivated and excel in science and math.
- Accelerated science is not only accelerated in time but is also a more challenging science.
- N.Y.S. Regents requirements include mandatory labs and taking the NYS Earth Science Regents Performance Lab Exams along with the Regents Written Exam in June.
- Students get a “jump start” on their high school classes while in the smaller and more contained middle school environment.
- Acceleration provides a greater scheduling flexibility for college classes, electives, and courses desired in an individualized learning plan.

### **How are students selected for the accelerated program?**

As a current 7<sup>th</sup> grade student who is interested in the science accelerated program in 8<sup>th</sup> grade will have the opportunity to be accepted but criteria including attendance, assessments and attitude will be used to determine if the student can maintain the rigor and self-discipline for a regent’s course. Acceptance into the accelerated science program will also be based on the following criteria:

- Minimum 89 average in 7<sup>th</sup> grade science each quarter.
- Minimum 87 average in 7<sup>th</sup> grade for 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters in math.
- Recommendation by 7<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher
- Recommendation by 7<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher.
- 95 % attendance record for 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **What are the expectations for accelerated students?**

- It is highly recommended that accelerated students maintain higher averages in science and math.
- It is important to emphasize that performance in Living Environment and Earth Science will become part of a student’s permanent record.
- Poor performance on a Regents exam in 8<sup>th</sup> grade may be detrimental.

### **Middle School Science Instructors:**

2015–2016 8th Grade Accelerated Living Environment Regents Course: Mrs. Patsy Graham

2015-2016 8th Grade Life Science: Mrs. Carolina A. O’Connor