



# Newton North High School

457 Walnut Street  
Newtonville, Massachusetts 02460

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Dear Parents,

I am writing to apprise you of the opportunity for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders to study the classical language of Latin at Newton North high school, either as their primary world language or in addition to the study of a modern language.

Several arguments for studying Latin are familiar: expansion of vocabulary, increased mastery of the English language in general, higher performance on standardized tests. These are good and practical reasons to study the language. But aside from these “practicalities”, Latin is a discipline that engages students in precise thinking while advancing their command of English. As life is in the details, so Latin is too: the language trains its students to look closely at the fine points, a skill transferable to math, science, and other disciplines.

Latin also opens a door to understanding how the ancient world has shaped western culture, and its interdisciplinary connections are infinite. It can thus be an interesting language choice for students who enjoy learning about history and the cultural foundations of our system of law and government as well as other aspects of western civilization impacted by the Roman way of life. It can also be fun. Latin I students, for example, engage in such activities as creating their own travelogue of the Roman world, and creating and drawing their own species as they learn about vocabulary used for naming real-world species. Likewise our Latin scholars have participated in a “divine election”, with each student playing the part of a god or goddess campaigning to become the new head of Mount Olympus.

In addition to being enjoyable and intellectually stimulating, Latin can be a good choice for a wide range of learners, including learners who find it challenging to communicate in a modern language. With our focus on building vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to be able to read Latin (rather than speak it), some students find it a more comfortable place.

Finally, as mentioned above, Newton North students can study a modern language along with Latin. In fact, several of our students currently do just that, and enjoy seeing the similarities and differences between a modern and an ancient language.

If you have any questions about Latin or any of our modern languages, please feel free to contact me at Newton North at 617-559-6300 or by e-mail at the address below.

Sincerely,

Nancy Marrinucci  
World Language Dept. Chair  
marrinuccin@newton.k12.ma.us