

Packin' Up...



A Guide to Middle School Transition

A Resource Guide
WCPSS
Office of Counseling and Student Services
www.wcpss.net

(Revised May 2015 by the WCPSS 6th Grade Counselor PLT and for RCMS by Ms. Mason)

Dear Parents and Students,

The transition from elementary to middle school is often an exciting, yet nerve-racking time for students. Best case scenario would be that each rising 6th grader feels prepared to enter middle school. As educators or parents, we can greatly enhance students' comfort level with this change by exposing them to common concerns that arise in middle school and equipping them with skills necessary to be successful. Packin' Up ...A Guide to Middle School Transition was created in an effort to support parents and students in this endeavor. The information within this guide can be used by parents at the elementary and middle school levels; therefore, it can be tailored to the school's goals and students' needs.

Sincerely,

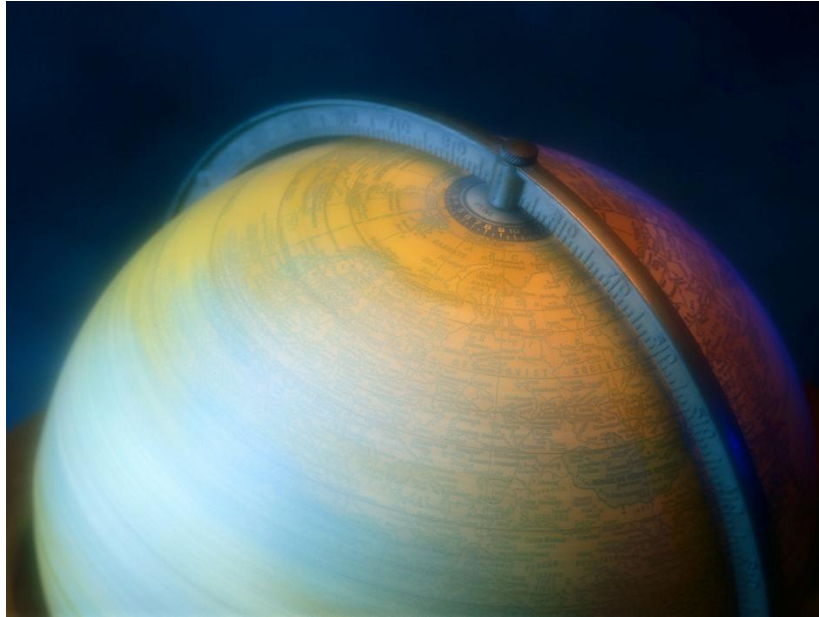
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I. General Information



General Information

The transition to middle school can be challenging for students due to differences in middle and elementary school settings. It is important that parents transition as well as their child. Parents and students have to adjust and know that in most cases, students no longer have one core teacher, but six or seven. This section will provide general information about the functioning of the middle school.

1. Who's Who in the Middle School?

Students may notice when they get to the middle school that there are several adults around, but they are not always sure what those adults do and who to ask for help.

Case Manager - It is important to know that students with special needs have been assigned a case manager to help ensure that their needs are being met. Special education teachers serve as the case manager for an identified group of students who have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP). These teachers are responsible for ensuring that the IEP is implemented, scheduling meetings to discuss an IEP, and/or to answer questions regarding the IEP. The 504 Contact is the case manager for students who have a Section 504 Accommodation Plan. In most middle schools, the 504 Contact is typically a counselor. The AIG Coordinator is the case manager for students who have a Differentiation Educational Plan (DEP). Finally, the English Language Learner (ELL) Resource Teacher is the case manager for students who have a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan. The Tier II/Tier III Team monitors students who have intervention plans to help build on specific skill deficits in literacy, mathematics, and/or behavior.

Grade Level Counselor - One very important thing for students to understand is that their middle school counselor is there to help them, just like their elementary counselor. For most middle schools within Wake County, there is one counselor for every grade level in the middle school. For many schools that counselor rotates with their students for all three years, but for some the counselors remain in the same grade level from year to year. The counselor in the middle school will typically not be in the classroom as much as the elementary counselors, but are available for individual and group sessions. The counselor is not an administrator and is not responsible for disciplinary actions.

Grade Level Administrator - The administrative layout of a middle school can be very confusing to some students. They have a principal of the whole school, but they will most likely have a grade level administrator (or Assistant Principal). The students' grade level administrator will more often than not be the one to handle safety, disciplinary, and/or facility situations within that grade level.

Guidance Technician - There is typically a guidance technician in each of the middle schools. This individual is usually the first person a new student meets at the school because they often

handle the initial registration process. The technician also coordinates the withdrawal process for students leaving the school.

Homeroom Teacher - The homeroom teacher is the student's first teacher of the school day where morning announcements are heard after the Pledge of Allegiance. This teacher records the daily attendance and tardies into PowerSchool.

School Resource Officer (SRO) - The school resource officer is not a security guard, but a law enforcement officer. These individuals are on campus to maintain student safety. All middle schools in the county have an SRO. The school resource officers are very approachable, and they are another source of help for students and their families.

School Social Worker - School Social Workers are trained and licensed professionals that provide a link between the home, school and community through support services that positively impact the development of the whole child. School Social Workers can provide support by helping parents understand their child's developmental and educational needs; providing access to school and community resources; helping navigate special education services; obtaining mental health services; and providing services for homeless families. School Social Workers are in all elementary and middle schools, alternative settings and some high schools.

2. Glossary of Middle School Terms:

Agenda - One of the most important objects a student will possess in middle school is his/her agenda. The agenda is essentially a planning book in which students can write down homework assignments, upcoming projects, dated activities, or any other important information. Using an agenda can help students with short-term and long-term goal-setting and planning. It can also be used as a communication tool. Because 6th graders will have many different classes and teacher expectations to keep track of, writing everything down is essential.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) - State Board of Education policy requires school districts to implement Credit by Demonstrated Master (CDM) - a process by which students can show mastery in a high school credit course without actually taking the course. Starting in 2015, students will be able to earn credit for a course without spending a set number of hours taking the course in a classroom. Under the Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) option, uniquely qualified students may "test out" or bypass a course if they have already mastered the content. Please visit <http://www.wcps.net/Domain/3432> for more information about the CDM process.

Core Classes - Although elective choices may vary by individual middle schools, all middle schools require each regular education student to take Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, and Science.

Discipline Policy - It is important that middle school students are aware early of the policies for the county and for the school. Wake County policies can be found in the Parent/Student handbook, and individual school policies can usually be found at the front of each student's

agenda. Students need to understand the differences between their elementary school rules and the new middle school rules, expectations, and consequences. Topics such as dress code policy and other common violations should be talked about at length with students.

Electives - These are classes that students take in addition to core classes that allow for variety in their day and exploring different course options. Students also are required to take Healthful Living, which comprises health education and physical education. Classes can be held quarterly, semester, or year-long. See pg. 12 for more details about electives at RCMS.

Inclusion - Students with special needs can have their instruction provided to them in the regular classroom setting. Hence, there is no pull-out for AIG or IEP students from their regular classroom settings. AIG students are typically served in the clustered classes, while IEP students may be instructed in the In Class Resource (ICR) classroom settings. IEP students may also be served through resource classes that coincide with their specific area of need.

Lockers - Students in middle school have to deal with lockers as one of their transnational activities. RCMS provides lockers for the students, with built in locks. The students do not need to visit their lockers after every class period. Scheduled times are provided for students to use their lockers. It is suggested for students to get a lock over the summer and to practice using a combination, this lock can be used on their locker room locker. At the start of the school year, homeroom teachers will allow students time to practice opening their locks and will always keep a list of students' combinations in case they forget! Teachers will always have a default key to unlock lockers when combinations are forgotten.

Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS) - Some schools are PBIS schools. This is a program established within the school for teaching, emphasizing, and rewarding positive behavior. Reedy Creek Eagles are encouraged to SOAR Towards Success: Safety, Ownership, Achievement and Respect.

Parent Portal/Homebase/PowerSchool - This is a system designed to give students and parents access to their electronic records, including schedules, attendance, and grades. Parents must complete a form before gaining access to their student's electronic records.

Single Subject Acceleration (SSA) - Single Subject Acceleration (SSA) is the practice of assigning a student to a higher-grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. SSA is an accelerative practice that allows students to show mastery of the content of a course without having taken the course. For example, a parent could nominate his/her child to skip a grade level of content in either Language Arts OR Mathematics. Please visit <http://wakeacceleration.weebly.com> for more information on SSA.

Student Services - The location that includes the social worker's office, Data manager's offices and reception area maintained by the guidance technician. Counselors' offices are located on the grade level hallways at Reedy Creek Middle School.

Supply List - By the beginning of the school year, schools provide a list of needed supplies for a student to have by team and/or elective teachers. Most schools have supply lists posted on their school's website.

Teams - In most middle schools, students will be assigned to a team. The team is traditionally comprised of four core teachers. Teaming is an important component to the middle school concept. Teaming allows the teachers to work together to create interdisciplinary units, which enhances student learning. Schools try to balance teachers on teams such that teacher personalities are diverse. Having a mix of different personalities hopefully ensures that each child can almost always find at least one teacher on their team with whom they connect. In addition, students are placed on teams in a way that promotes academic and demographic equity.

Team Conference - Parents can request to schedule a conference with their child's core teachers to discuss their child's performance and/or express concerns. Teams are great for parents because the parent can contact one teacher and get information to, or from, his or her child's whole team of teachers. The grade level counselor is responsible for scheduling team conferences and may be invited to attend. At Reedy Creek Middle School the student is the main person on a student's academic team, so their present will be required. Times are set aside to hold meetings during the school day, during the teacher planning. Language interpreters available upon request with proper notice.

Testing (standardized)/Formal Assessments

End of Grade (EOG) tests - The EOG tests have been developed by the state in response to legislation requiring assessment of the state's curriculum, as well as higher-order, critical thinking skills in Grades 3-8. The tests cover reading and mathematics. EOG tests are state normed and are multiple choice. Students receive a level score, a scale score, and a percentile score. The purpose of these tests is to provide information about the school and school system's achievement related to the goals of the Common Core Standards.

End Of Course (EOC) tests - These tests are given to students who take high school level courses, such as Common Core Math I (CCMI).

North Carolina Final Exam (NCFE) - The NC Final Exams are used in grades or subject areas that do not have an EOG or EOC to measure student growth. In middle school, students take NCFEs in Social Studies, Science, and some high school level math classes.

Case 21/Benchmark Assessments - These formal assessments are typically administered once a quarter to provide immediate feedback on student skills to ensure they are ready for EOG testing. The results of these benchmark assessments help to identify individual student and classroom needs and provide information for teachers to reinforce or reteach skills to prepare students for state assessments based on Common Core/state standards.

PathDriver Universal Screenings - The PathDriver Universal Screenings are administered three times a school year and help to identify students who may need additional support with math and/or literacy skills. Teachers use the screening data, along with additional data (e.g. class grades, EOG scores, and observations) to guide instructional decisions and support growth. For students who may need additional support, teachers will

"dig deeper" to uncover exactly where gaps exist and will collaborate with colleagues to develop a plan to meet student needs.

National Assessment of Educational Program (NAEP) - The NAEP is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Assessments are conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. Since NAEP assessments are administered uniformly using the same sets of test booklets across the nation, NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and selected urban districts. The NAEP provides a clear picture of student academic progress over time.

Transition Time - The time between classes is usually very short ranging between 3-5 minutes. This is plenty of time as long as students do not continuously stop in the halls and engage in long conversations with friends. A bell system will inform students when the school day begins and another at dismissal.

II. Academic Information



ACADEMIC INFORMATION

1. Grading System in Middle School

LETTER GRADES -

Note: The grading scale below is new Spring 2015 to Policy 5520 R&P.

Students earn letter grades of A, B, C, D, or F on their report cards. They may also be assigned a grade of "I" for "Incomplete" if, because of an emergency, they do not complete work by the end of the grading period. The "Incomplete" becomes an "F" if work is not finished by an assigned time. Letter grades have the following numerical values:

A	=	90 - 100
B	=	80 - 89
C	=	70 - 79
D	=	60 - 69
F	=	less than 60
FF	=	failed for violation of attendance policy

2. Standards-based Grading vs. Letter Grading

Letter grades are quite different from standards based grading. In standards based grading, students are assessed as being at, above, or below grade level using the 1, 2, 3, 3* or 4 number system. Work habits and conduct grades are separate from the student's content proficiency. Students are not given a letter grade for assignments or tests. Rubrics are used to assess whether or not the student is performing at, above, or below grade level, and a level number is given. The letter grade system is used to measure how well a student has mastered a specific objective, rather than being assessed on broad concepts over time. This is often shown in a percentage of the questions that the student got correct. Most sixth grade teachers use a percentage scale. For example, some teachers may use these percentages: homework 15%, class work 15%, quiz 30%, and test 40%. Please understand that a '3' in elementary school does not equate to an 'A' or 'B' on the percentage scale. It is important to remember that the best way to determine if a student has mastered a concept is the average of his/her test and/or quiz grades.

3. Honor Roll Recognition

Most middle schools recognize students who have made the honor roll. An honor roll is a list of students who have made either all A's (the A honor roll) or have made a 3.0 GPA (honor roll) on their report card during each quarter's marking period. Middle school recognitions may include certificates, rewards, names being read on announcements, lists of names in the local newspaper, and/or awards ceremonies.

4. Homework Requirements

In middle school, students have homework to complete every night, presentations to give in class, and big group projects to turn in. It is the foundation for future tests. Homework at the middle school level most often is graded and averaged in as a portion of a student's grade. Rising 6th graders must understand that they will be held accountable for correctly completing homework, and that their grades may drop if they consistently do not turn in completed homework in a timely fashion. Parents should encourage their students to find a "homework buddy" on their team to ask about assignments and missed work when they are absent. Several middle school teachers have websites (ie. Blackboard, edmodo, schoolnet, pbworks, weebly) that parents and students can access for assignments information. A consistent set student/homework time will allow students time to balance. According to WCPSS board policy, middle school students will have no more than 90 minutes of homework a night.

5. Time Management/Study Habits

In middle school, students normally have at least six classes in a school day- with six different teachers, six different expectations, and sometimes six different homework assignments! Along with being responsible for all of the above, **students must be responsible for managing time; both at school and at home.** One major academic process that students must fit into their busy schedules is homework - whether completing homework assignments, major projects, or studying for tests. Learning and utilizing study skills will both qualify and quantify time for a 6th grader. Students should use completed work as a study guide along with notes from class. When studying ahead, they should review their notes each night.

6. Core Classes

Sixth grade students study English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. More information regarding the content of these subject areas can be viewed on the WCPSS site: <https://sites.google.com/a/wcpss.net/ms201415/home>

7. Elective Courses

Each middle school offers a program of electives. Electives are courses that students can request based on their interests. Elective courses may be offered in nine-week, semester, and/or year-long formats. Elective offerings vary by school; therefore, each school typically prepares a registration sheet that lists the elective courses it will offer. The availability of electives depends on student interest, an appropriate facility, and staffing. Electives offered to 6th graders in the 2014-15 school year were: Exploratory Spanish, Introduction to Animal Science, Visual Arts Exploratory, Computer Skills and

Applications, Exploring FACS: Family Focus, Technology Design and Innovation, Beginning Band, Reading Acceleration and ESL.

8. Healthful Living

Healthful Living is required for all 6th grade students and includes health education and physical education. These two courses complement each other as students learn how to be healthy and physically active for a lifetime.

CPR instruction is presented as part of the 8th grade Health curriculum. Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, successful completion of CPR instruction is a high school graduation requirement for all North Carolina students. Successful completion is defined in the Essential Standards Curriculum as "demonstrating basic CPR techniques and procedures on a mannequin and passing a Red Cross or American Heart Association approved test of CPR skills." Students who successfully complete CPR in 8th grade are considered to have met the requirement.

9. Support/Tutoring Programs

The most effective way to explore options for academic support for students is to contact the student's teacher. Other resources to explore include: school website, grade level counselor, and/or school's PTSA.

III. Social Development



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Problem-solving, Making Good Choices, and Responsibility

A student's first priority in middle school is to learn and mature both academically and socially. Choices will directly affect grades and participation in extracurricular activities. Part of the growth process is acquiring advocacy and communication skills. These skills will allow students to gain independence and establish trust with both teachers and parents. The students' ability to problem-solve and choose positive ways to interact with parents, teachers, and peers will aid in making their middle school experience successful.

2. Making/Choosing Friends

Learning how to make new friends will be extremely important in the middle school setting. Going to middle school is a great opportunity to make new friends. Some tips for making new friends are:

1. Get involved in school activities
2. Introduce yourself to students who sit around you in your classes
3. Choose different partners during group work assignments in your classes
4. Sit with different groups of people at lunch
5. Consult your school counselor

3. Peer Pressure

Middle school is a time of great transition emotionally, physically, and socially. All of these changes can either be nurtured, or hindered by peers. Remember, peer pressure can be either positive or negative. Examples of positive peer pressure might include encouraging friends to study by offering to study them or motivating them to work hard at a sport. Examples of negative peer pressure might include someone encouraging students to spread rumors, be disruptive in class, or skip school. In order to best handle social pressure, the following tips might be helpful:

1. Find friends with similar interests, values, and beliefs
2. Be assertive—tell friends what you like/don't like
3. Don't use alcohol or other drugs
4. Avoid situations in which you know that you could get into trouble
5. Learn to handle conflicts in a positive way
6. Talk with trusted adults about situations that you don't understand and/or that make you feel uncomfortable

4. Interactions with Older Students

Most middle schools are designed so that 6th graders are in grade level teams and hallways, and interactions with upper classmen are limited to before/after school busses and clubs. Just as in elementary school, positive social interactions of all students are encouraged,

and bullying is not tolerated. If students find themselves in uncomfortable situations, they should be aware that teachers, counselors, and/or any other school personnel are there to help them.

5. Bullying

Below is the WCPSS Board Policy regarding bullying/harassment:

As used in the WCPSS School Board Policy, harassing or bullying behavior is any repeated, systematic pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication on school property; at any school sponsored function; on a school bus; or as otherwise stated in Board Policy 6400- Student Code of Conduct, and that:

- a. Places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- b. Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. A hostile environment means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Harassing or bullying behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Bullying is unfair (meaning the "bully" uses some sort of power over his/her victim) and one-sided (meaning only one person or one group of people is engaging in bullying behavior in the situation). Bullying happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose. Help is available to students who feel that they are being bullied. Please contact your teacher, school counselor, grade level administrator, School Resource Officer, or any trusted adult regarding incidences of bullying.

Don't be a bystander! If a student witnesses a bullying situation, they have the power to be part of the problem or part of the solution depending on their reactions to the situation. They can exacerbate the situation by doing nothing, encouraging the bully, or pretending not to see. Students can help the situation by helping the victim to get out of the situation, encouraging the victim to get help, and/or reporting the situation to a trusted adult. (*)

(*) Excerpts from Steps to Respect, A Bullying Prevention Program: Committee for Children, 2001.

See Handouts for definitions and how to report bullying (Bullying Prevention Worksheet)

IV. Extracurricular Activities/ Getting Involved



Extracurricular Activities/Getting Involved

1. WCPSS Sports Teams

An activity that rising 6th graders often look forward to in middle school is the opportunity to represent their school in athletics. Only 7th and 8th grade students can try out and participate on a sports team if they meet eligibility requirements. However, here are a couple of ways 6th graders can get involved in supporting their school athletic programs:

- a. **Be a Manager** - Most of the coaches in middle school will reserve the role of team manager for an eager 6th grader. Most students that become managers for a sports team either want to try out for the team in the future or just have a genuine interest in the sport. Students wanting to be managers should be aware that it is a significant time commitment and could take away from other activities. Students interested in being a manager should contact the appropriate coach as soon as possible. Often times, there are a lot of students that want to be manager so coaches may choose on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- b. **Be a Fan** - 6th grade students should be encouraged to come to athletic events and support their teams and their school. Games are not only a great way to plug into the school, they are a great way to meet new friends and hang out with your old ones.

2014-15 RCMS teams:

Fall: Football, Girls Soccer, Girls Volleyball, Cheerleading (Fall and Winter),

Winter: Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Cheerleading (Fall and Winter),

Spring: Boys Soccer, Girls Softball, Track

See Handouts Section for Athletic Eligibility Requirements

2. Clubs

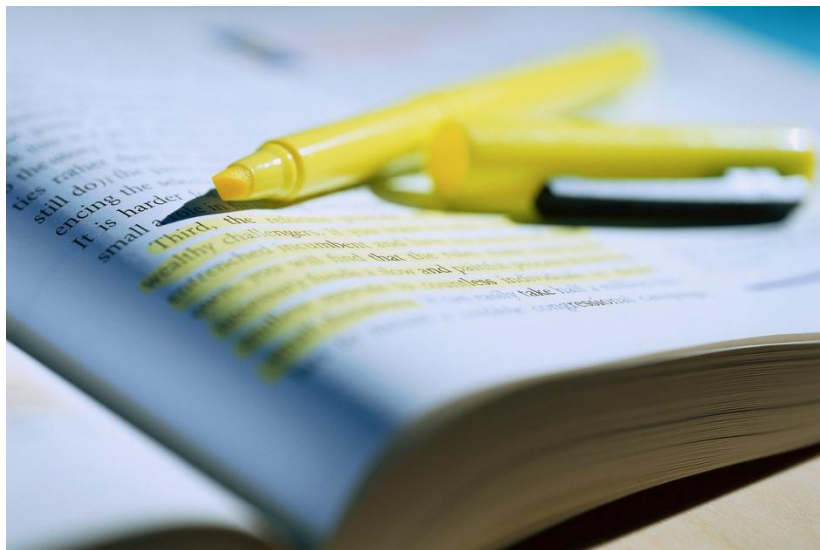
There are some clubs and extracurricular activities available for 6th graders. Some include Student Council, Battle of the Books Club, Book Club, Chess Club, Model United Nations, Science Olympiad, Dance Team and/or the Step Team. Clubs and extracurricular activities will vary depending on the middle school so students are encouraged to visit their school's website and contact club advisors to find out about these clubs.

Many of these programs may require after school and evening commitments for performances.

2014-15 RCMS clubs:

Art, Basketball, Battle of the Books, Beta, Cubing, Dance, Drama, FCCLA, Helping Hands, Jazz Band, Run, Self Expression, Sports, Student Council, Wildlife

V. Tips for Parents & Guardians



Tips for Middle School Parents & Guardians

Parent participation in education is closely related to student achievement. Both of you will be affected by this change to middle school. The key during adolescence is to balance your support while promoting responsibility and independence in your child.

- Become informed about your new school by attending orientations, going to open houses, reading school guides/student handbooks and visiting the school's website regularly for current information.
- Consider your child's feelings. Your 6th grader may not want you joining them for lunch, but you can stay involved by volunteering in your child's school, chaperoning on field trips, and/or joining the PTSA.
- Know the name of your child's team, the homeroom teacher, the team leader and the school counselor for his/her grade. Students of all ages benefit when family and school cooperate and have a positive relationship. If you have questions or concerns don't hesitate to call or email the school staff.
- Provide the supplies from the various teachers' lists. Ask to see your child's agenda (assignment notebook with information and communications from teachers) regularly. Ask them to show you his/her homework, rather than asking, "Did you do your homework?"
- Be sure to limit after-school recreational activities, provide a quiet study area and set the expectation that your child will be working regularly on homework and long-term projects. Set rules about TV and computer use. Organization and time management skills must be developed so students will be prepared and not feel overwhelmed.
- Know the dress code for your school and check to see that your child is wearing school appropriate attire daily. Be more cognizant of the need of increased personal hygiene as developmental body changes occur.

- Check the calendar for your specific school. Know when interims and report cards go out, dates of early release days and any dates of special activities (e.g. Picture Day, athletic events, EOGs).
- Be sure the main office has current contact information - don't assume your child will know or share changes in phone numbers or addresses. Provide updated information to appropriate school staff members as needed.
- Talk to your child about school and peers. Listen for comments that reflect how they are feeling and what they are thinking. Expect your child to make mistakes and have personal struggles. Give them time to think and make decisions about how to handle their problems and deal with the consequences. Ask your child "how do you want me to help?" or "how can I help?" if they tell you about issues they are having about school.
- Provide opportunities for your child to develop their interests and socialize with friends, but be sure to monitor their choices. Peer acceptance, social status, and self-esteem issues become increasingly important in the middle school.
- Consult the professional development section of your child school's library for books and/or videos on academic and social issues such as ADHD, organizational skills, behavior interventions, or character education. Encourage your child to check out books from the school or public library about organizational skills, bullying, and self-esteem.
- Familiarize yourself with the way your school communicates with students, parents, and the community. These may include phone messages, email blasts, group text messages, or Twitter. Be prepared to check the school website often, sign up for a Parent Portal/Homebase account, and learn to navigate teacher websites.
- Monitor your child's online and phone use. Check text message histories regularly and monitor your child's social media accounts. Learn about apps and websites that your child accesses or uses regularly.

Homework Hints

Here are some tips for you and some ideas to pass along to help your children make the most of their study time.

- ◆ Provide a place to study that is free of distractions such as television noise and people talking on the phone. (But provide soft music or white noise if it helps your children concentrate.)
- ◆ Instill a positive attitude. Help your children to think, "I can do this."
- ◆ Keep all necessary supplies in one place, such as at a desk or computer station. Having pencils, paper, and calculators all in one spot means your children won't have to search for them, which saves time.
- ◆ Have separate folders for each course to help keep paperwork organized, so it doesn't get lost in the bottom of a backpack.
- ◆ Establish a regularly scheduled time for doing homework. This time probably should not be immediately after school. Young people need a little time to relax.
- ◆ Have your children start with the most difficult assignment first.
- ◆ Let your children take five-minute breaks every so often.
- ◆ Keep the resources they need available. Start a personal reference library for your children, and keep it current. Begin with the basics: dictionary, thesaurus, almanac, desktop encyclopedia, atlas. Add reference books on specific topics related to your children's classes and interests. If you have a computer, consider buying an encyclopedia on CD-ROM or access online encyclopedias and reference sites.
- ◆ Encourage your children to study with other students when appropriate.
- ◆ Remind your children to do as much work as possible during the school day, and if they ride the bus and they feel it's possible, to take advantage of that time to get work done as well.
- ◆ Recommend that your children keep an assignment notebook so they know what homework must be done each day.
- ◆ Suggest your children hang on to past quizzes and tests to prepare for future ones.
- ◆ Encourage your children to make connections between their homework and any cultural or family history.
- ◆ Praise your children for doing their homework.
- ◆ Keep in contact with your children's teachers to be aware of the quality and quantity of work being turned in.

Stay Connected

Parent Portal/HomeBase Accounts

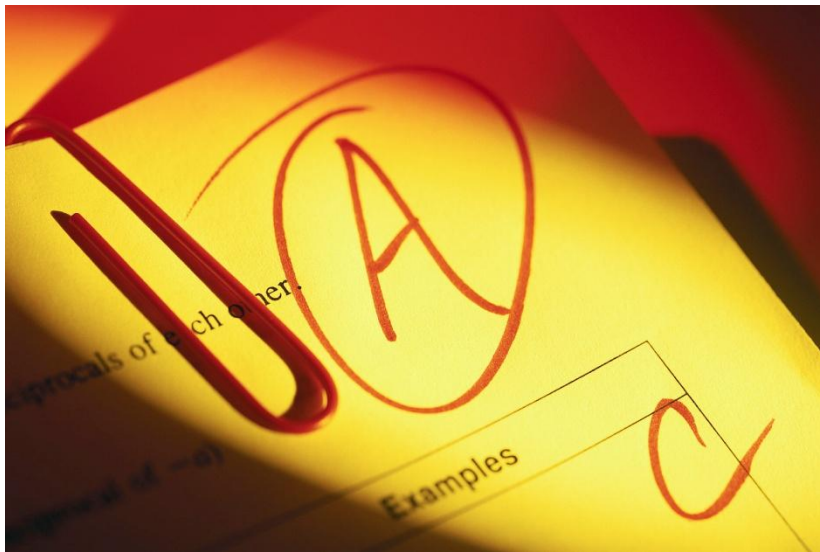
All middle schools use Wake County's Parent Portal/HomeBase/PowerSchools. This unique system allows both students and parents to get up-to-date information on progress reports and grades, assignments/projects/tests, and attendance data with a click of a button. Parents will be required to fill out a Parent Portal/HomeBase registration form at their student's school, or by using the link below, to be granted access to Parent Portal/HomeBase. This will allow both parents and students to keep track of current grades and missing assignments from home. Contact your child's middle school for further instructions to obtain a Parent Portal/HomeBase account.

Please visit <http://www.wcpss.net/domain/69> for more information about Parent Portal/HomeBase accounts.

Other Online Communication Tools

Find out if your child's middle school teachers use popular online communication tools, such as email, Edmodo, TeacherPage, Remind, or Blackboard to communicate with students and parents. Many times you will find out that middle school teachers use these sites to give a daily or weekly update of what is being taught in their classrooms, including test and quiz dates or project due dates. These tools are easily accessible and usually linked straight from the school's website or a teacher's own website, and are very helpful in keeping parents and students informed of what's going on in the classroom.

VI. Resources



RESOURCES

Academic Information Websites

Wake County Public Schools - policies, calendars, current news

www.wcpss.net

NC Dept. of Public Instruction - course of study, EOGs, school report cards,

www.dpi.state.nc.us/

College Foundation of North Carolina - career inventories, high school planner

www.cfnc.org/

College Board - non-profit organization that connects students to college success

www.collegeboard.org

Eric Digests - education articles clearinghouse

www.ericdigests.org/

Middle School Websites

National Middle School Association

www.nmsa.org/

PBS Kids - for elementary and middle school students

www.pbskids.org/itsmylife/school/middleschool/

Kids Health - articles, games, resources for parents, kids & teens

www.kidshealth.org

Girls Power - information & activities for girls and parents

www.girlpower.org

Kids Portal for the US Government - information & activities related to school, careers, recreation, etc.

www.kids.gov/

How to Study

www.How-to-study.com

National PTA - see parent resources

www.pta.org

Bridges - student achievement for parents and students
www.bridges.com/

Parent Guide to K- 12 Success
www.greatschools.net/

Mental Health & Social Issues Websites

National Mental Health Association - issues, information for all ages
www.nmha.org/

National Association of School Psychologists - helping children achieve
www.ansponline.org/

National Mental Health Information Center - information for all ages
www.mentalhealth.samsha.gov/

Bullying

www.freespirit.com/ - materials and student site

www.cyberbully.org/ - for parents

www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp - interactive for students

www.stopbullying.gov - for parents and students

www.stompoutbullying.org - for students

Other Helpful Websites

Scholastic

www.scholastic.com/parents/

School Family - 10 Tips for Middle School Parents

www.schoolfamily.com/school-family-articles/article/801-10-tips-for-middle-school-parents

Literature

Social Rules for Kids - The Top 100 Social Rules Kids Need to Succeed by Susan Diamond

The Unwritten Rules of Friendship: Simple Strategies to Help Your Child Make Friends by Natalie Madorsky Elman

Middle School Makeover: Improving the Way You and Your Child Experience the Middle School Years by Michelle Icard

The Blessings of a B Minus: Using Jewish Teachings To Raise Resilient Teenagers by Dr. Wendy Mogul

A Smart Girl's Guide to Starting Middle School by Julie Williams Montalbano

Parenting Preteens with a Purpose: Navigating the Middle Years by Kate Thomsen

Queen Bees and Wannabees by Rosalind Wiseman

Queen Bee Moms and Kingpin Dads by Rosalind Wiseman

The Guide: For Guys by Rosalind Wiseman

Masterminds and Wingmen: Helping Our Boys Cope with Schoolyard Power, Locker-Room Tests, Girlfriends, and the New Rules of Boy World by Rosalind Wiseman

VII. Handouts

Bullying, Harassment Worksheet

Counseling and Student Services

Wake County Public School System ♦ Cary, North Carolina 27518

Definition: As used in the WCPSS School Board Policy, harassing or bullying behavior is any repeated, systematic pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication on school property; at any school sponsored function; on a school bus; or as otherwise stated in Board Policy 6400- Student Code of Conduct, and that:

a. Places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or

b. Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. A hostile environment means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Harassing or bullying behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Person Reporting Bullying _____ I'd like this report to be anonymous

Place an X in the appropriate box to indicate your role as reporter:

Student being bullied Student (witness/bystander) Parent/guardian Close adult relative School staff member

Today's Date _____ Date bullying occurred _____

Name of the person being bullied _____ Grade _____

Name of the person doing the bullying _____ Grade _____

Location of bullying incident _____

Type of Bullying (check all that apply)

- Physical Bullying (punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, inappropriate touching, headlocks, teasing, tickling, fighting, school pranks)
- Emotional Bullying (spreading malicious rumors, keeping out of a certain group, ganging on up on others, silent treatment, harassment, provocation)
- Verbal Bullying (profanity at the target, tormenting, being laughed at, rumors, harassment, commenting negatively about someone's looks, gender identity)
- Cyber Bullying (abuse using email, instant messaging, text messaging, websites, social networking sites, etc.)
- Other: _____

Describe details of the bullying (please include where the bullying occurred, any other witnesses, and any school staff that was told): _____

*Please give this form to your teacher or to another staff member. Thank you for making this report.

Bullying Investigation / School Use Only From this Point

Name of School Level Investigator _____ Position _____

Name of Aggressor _____ Grade _____

Repeat Offender Yes No

Repeat Target Yes No

Name of Repeat Target _____ Grade _____

Witness _____ Grade _____

Witness _____ Grade _____

Investigation Summary:

*Please use additional sheets of paper and attach to this document as needed

Conclusion from the Investigation

Finding of Bullying? Yes No

Contacts: Aggressor's parents Target's parents Law Enforcement Date _____

Action Taken: Loss of privileges Detention Referral Suspension ISS ALC Other

Action Details:

Victim Support: Mediation Counseling Other _____

Follow Up:

Aggressor _____ Date _____

Target _____ Date _____

Details

Signature of School Level Investigator _____ Date _____

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 2014-15

Sixth grade students interested in participating in athletics in the 2015-2016 school year should familiarize themselves with the following eligibility requirements and athletic policies. Listed below are the sports seasons and the athletic programs during that season.

Fall

Cheerleading
Football
Soccer - girls
Volleyball - girls

Winter

Cheerleading
Basketball

Spring

Soccer - boys
Track
Softball - girls

2015-2016 Sport Season Dates

The organizational meeting dates, first tryout/practice date, and first regular season playing dates for each sport season will be determined in the spring 2015 for the 2015-2016 school year.

Eligibility: In order to be eligible for any athletic activity for the fall semester 2015, the athlete:

1. A student upon first entering grade seven (7) is academically eligible for competition on middle school teams. The principal shall have evidence of the date of each player's entry into the 7th grade.
2. Must meet promotion requirements to be eligible for the fall semester.
3. Must meet all eligibility requirements prior to the first tryout/practice date.
4. Must have a completed and signed Middle School Athletic Participation Form prior to the first tryout/practice date.
5. Student-athlete and parent/legal custodian must read the Concussion Information Sheet, and student-athlete and parent/legal custodian must initial and sign the Student/Athlete and Parent/Legal Custodian Concussion Statement.
6. Must not participate if he/she becomes 15 years of age on or before August 31, 2014.
7. Must receive a medical examination once every 365 days by a licensed medical physician, physician's assistant or family practitioner in the United States.
8. Must purchase regular school accident insurance or provide proof of insurance coverage by filling out the insurance information waiver on the Middle School Athletic Participation Form.
9. Must not participate (practice or play) if ineligible.
10. Must not participate (practice or play) in any athletic event if suspended or is actively serving in the in-school suspension program for that day or days.
11. Must be present in school the entire day in order to participate in practices or games.

To Be Eligible for the Spring Semester 2016

12. Must earn passing grades (D or better) in one less course than the required core courses each semester to be eligible for participating during the succeeding semester. Passing grades must be attained in language arts and mathematics. In addition to the core course requirements, at least fifty percent of all remaining courses must be passed.
13. Must not have more than 14 total absences (85% attendance requirement) in the semester prior to athletic participation. This is a State Board of Education requirement. According to Board Policy 6860, students who participate in interscholastic athletics must meet all requirements of the State Board of Education.

Other Athletic Policies

1. A player must practice a total of six (6) days before playing in a game in all sports except football, where a player must practice eight (8) days.
2. No student may be eligible to participate at the Middle School level for a period lasting longer than 4 consecutive semesters beginning with the student's entry into 7th grade.
3. A player injured requiring medical attention and/or absent due to illness must meet eligibility requirements and must have practiced the required number of days above (# 1). This player may not participate in practice or a contest without a doctor's note. Students absent from athletic practice 5 or more days due to illness or injury shall receive a medical release by a licensed physician before readmittance to practice or play.
4. If school is not in session or school closes early, no practice or game will take place. There will be no practice on Saturdays (this includes year round schools), holidays, or vacation days.