

**Class of 2016**

**Students Focusing on Learning**



**Paulding County School District**

**Middle School 101**

***A Handbook for Students and Parents***

***Paulding County School District***

*The vision of the Paulding County School District is to provide a safe, healthy, supportive environment focused on learning and committed to high academic achievement. Through the shared responsibility of all stakeholders, students will be prepared as lifelong learners and as participating, contributing members of our dynamic and diverse community.*

## Beginning Middle School in Paulding County

Making the move from elementary to middle school can be exciting and challenging for students and parents. Sometimes, it may feel like a roller coaster ride. It can be an unpredictable time with highs and lows, and your student feeling upbeat, inquisitive, and thoughtful one minute or sad and apathetic the next minute. Moving to middle school is a change that can cause a myriad of concerns, emotions, and behaviors for young adolescents and their parents. Not only do students experience stress during this transition, but parents are often concerned about the welfare of their children. Students and parents may have many questions, fears, and even misconceptions.

While everyone makes many transitions during their lifetime, the change from elementary to middle school can bring about many questions and concerns. For many fifth grade students the past six years have been spent in a smaller, more family-style elementary school program, and both students and parents have known what to expect at school. Both knew the policies of the school, what the handbook stated, and the schedule of the day. Parents knew how to help their child to have a successful learning experience. To address this transition, address new feelings, and prepare for middle school, the middle school advisement handbook has been created.

This handbook addresses:

- Transition Events
- Academics
  - Characteristics of Middle School
  - Middle School Curriculum
  - Testing
- Career Planning
- Personal/Social Issues
  - Characteristics of Middle School Child
  - Concerns of Middle School Students
  - Social Issues
- Parent Involvement
  - What Parents Need to Know
  - Tips for Middle School Parents
- School Personnel
- The Transition
- Middle School Athletics
- Web-site Links



*"Life is like an ever-shifting kaleidoscope - a slight change, and all patterns alter."*

*Sharon Salzberg*

## 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Transition Events

### **Parent Night**

Fifth Grade Parent Night is scheduled by each school in May. During Parent Night teachers, administrators and counselors are introduced and a brief PowerPoint Presentation used county-wide is given to parents as an overview of what to expect when their children begin middle school.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Camp**

The transition from elementary to middle school can be scary for both students and their parents. To make this time less stressful, the middle schools of Paulding County hold a sixth grade Summer Camp before the school year begins. This is an opportunity to become acquainted with life as a middle school student and meet teachers, administrators, and other rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.

#### How Do You Register for Camp?

Registration forms are available at each middle school during the Parent Night and until summer break begins. Therefore, schools begin the registration process at Parent Night in May as well as send information home before the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade school year to be mailed to the school. The cost for camp is decided by individual schools and early registration is requested. Registration will be available the day of camp, but a late registration fee may apply.

#### What Do Students Need to Bring to Camp?

All materials needed for camp will be included in registration packets. Students are asked to wear comfortable clothing and shoes. Food is provided.

Extra money may be needed to purchase school spirit wear.

#### What About the Parents?

While the students are learning about the structure of middle school, a parent Questions and Answer Session is offered to meet with either with “Experienced” middle school parents or building administration and staff.

Contact the middle school where your child will attend for additional, detailed information.

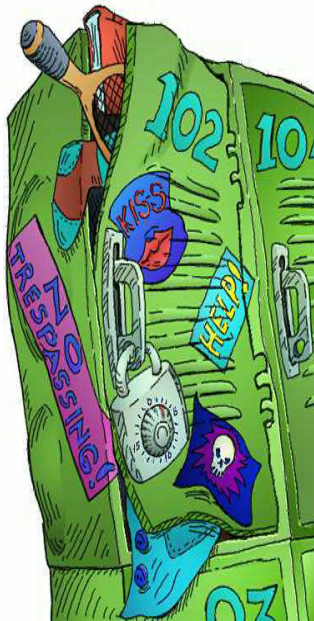
# Academics

## National Standards for Academic Development

The American School Counselor's Association national model has three academic goals: skills for learning, school success, and academics for life success. Middle school students need attitudes, knowledge and skills that will contribute to effective learning. Students often leave an elementary school that they are both comfortable and familiar with and enter a middle school where the expectations for performance and responsibility will increase dramatically. While these students are struggling with the transition from being child-like to adult-like, they are also expected to adjust to a new academic setting.

**Standard A.** Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.

**Standard B.** Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial postsecondary options, including college success and satisfaction.



**Standard C.** Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.

### Organization

- ✓ Students should use an assignment book or academic planner to keep track of when assignments are due, when tests are scheduled, meetings, practices, and project due dates. Check your student's agenda.
  - ✓ Encourage your student to keep their book bag and locker neat and orderly. A messy book bag or locker can slow a student down and cause them to be late for class.
  - ✓ Help your student develop a system for organizing his/her notebook(s). They may choose to use a different notebook for each class or to use one three-ring binder with dividers. Regardless of their choice, help them choose a system and stick with it.
- ✓ Teach your student to master big projects by breaking them down into smaller ones. Help your student set realistic goals for completing the project early.



### Study Routines

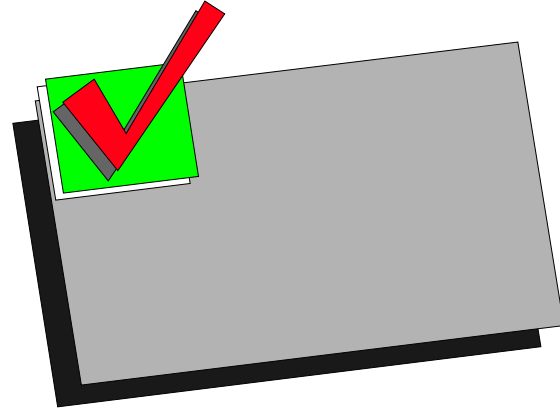
- ✓ Make time for homework. Be sure that your student has a special time each day to complete homework. Help your student balance his or her life: homework vs. other activities.
- ✓ Make a place for homework. Students need a quiet, well-lit place to work. Supplies that are necessary to complete work

should be close by and distractions should be kept at a minimum.

- ✓ Encourage your student to prepare for school the night before. Organizing notebooks, selecting clothing, and packing book bags the night before will help your middle school student have a relaxing start for the school day.

### **Use Reminders**

- ✓ Encourage your student to use reminders. There is no way that they can remember everything they need to know in middle school. Reminders can help when they forget their locker combination, bus number, homework assignments, or emergency numbers.
- ✓ Reminders can also be helpful for students when there is a change in routine. Use notes to help your student remember where they are to go after school, what special items they may need for school, or if there is something they need to remember to bring home from school.
- ✓ If you will not be home when your student arrives in the afternoon, you may want to use reminders to help him or her stay on task while you are away.



# Characteristics of the Middle School

## Middle School Vocabulary

**Academic Classes** – Middle school students take language arts, mathematics, reading, science, and social studies classes.



**Band and Chorus** – Music classes offered through the connections program for interested students at all grade levels. All sixth grade students have the opportunity to attend a band orientation.

**Connections Classes** – Connections classes include family and consumer science, keyboarding, band, and chorus. Sixth grade students typically take a different connection's class each nine-week period.

**Grading Scale** – The grading scale in middle school is based on point averages.

A = 100% - 90%

B = 89% - 80%

C = 79% - 70%

F = 69% and below.



**Homework** – The middle school student has homework three to five nights per week. Homework is practice for knowledge. Reviewing notes, reading a chapter in the text, book reports, projects, and other types of written work are examples of homework a middle school student might expect. Sixth grade students should plan on approximately 10-15 minutes of homework per subject. Students need to be motivated to do homework. Students need a quiet place to study and set time limits for weekday evenings. Some reasonable questions to ask your student, when they are struggling with homework are:



Do you understand what you are supposed to do?

Please tell me step-by-step.

Have you read the directions?

Do you have everything that you need to complete the task (book, notes, ruler, calculator, pencils, etc.)

Did you miss class when the instructions were given?

Are there terms that you do not understand?

Would it help you to move to a quieter place without distractions?

**Make up Work** - Parents may request make-up work for their students when they have been absent. Please keep in mind that we must give the teachers 24 hours notice. Note individual school procedures in student handbooks.

**Report Cards** – Paulding County Middle Schools operate on the full-year system. Each year is made up of two semesters and each semester is eighteen weeks long. Progress reports are issued each 4 ½ weeks and report cards are issued every nine weeks. With the exception of the connections grades, nine-week grades are not final. In the core academics subjects grades are final at the end of the school year. Nine-week report card determines honor roll, promotion



and retention. Concerns about grades should be directed to your child's teacher first. The school counselor will set up a parent conference for you after you have spoken with the teacher(s). Please use Infinite Campus to review attendance and grades. Infinite Campus is accessible at the Paulding County School District website via the internet.

**Schedule** – Each individual student is given a schedule of classes. Students have six classes per day. Each student schedule is unique depending upon the needs of the individual.



**Sports-Middle School Conference**--Sports activities at the middle school include softball, football, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer and cheerleading.



**Venture** – This is the program for identified academically gifted students in Paulding County. Students currently enrolled in a Paulding County elementary gifted services program will be placed in a middle school gifted program. In middle school, gifted classes meet each day for one or more class periods. Gifted students are served in a language arts and/or science based program with a certified teacher of the gifted. This class takes the place of his/her regular language arts and /or science class.

**Team/Pod** – Each student in a middle school is assigned to a team. There are usually three to five teams at each grade level. The team consists of a group of students and teachers who work together throughout the year. Typically, teams consist of three to five teachers. The team concept allows students to have a close student-teacher relationship while still having the opportunity to work with a variety of teachers. The team concept also allows teachers to work together to help each student develop to the best of his/her ability. The make-up of each pod includes students of all ability levels. A middle school team/pod teacher teaches between 90-150 students each day.



## Middle School Curriculum

Paulding County middle schools serve students in 6th, 7th and 8th grades. There is a rigorous and challenging curriculum for all students in a safe and supportive environment. Intensive instruction is offered in English language arts, reading, science, mathematics, social studies, vocabulary, spelling, health, and for some, Modern language, through an instructional program designed to foster a positive learning environment for preadolescent students. Connections classes include chorus, family and consumer science, keyboarding, and band. Students who meet state guidelines may qualify for special services through the gifted or special education programs.

You may link to core subject areas by going to the department websites via the Paulding County School District website and clicking on Curriculum.

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## Middle School Modern Language Program

Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade who have scored at or above the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile on the reading comprehension section of a nationally normed standardized test taken during the fifth or sixth grades may take a Modern language class in lieu of a reading class. Spanish is offered at each middle school during the regular school day to qualified students.

At the conclusion of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year of Modern language study, students who successfully complete the course will be awarded a final grade and one unit of high school credit will be recorded on the high school transcript. All students who complete modern language through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year will accept the grade earned, and this grade will be recorded on the high school transcript. Students who wish to continue the language studied in middle school enroll in the second year Modern language class at the local high school or select another Modern language for high school study.

Middle School Modern Language	Ninth Grade Placement
Completion of a Modern language program with a final passing grade in eighth grade.	Continue in second year of same language or Begin a new language
Failure to complete the Modern language program with a passing grade in eighth grade year	Repeat language in ninth grade or begin a new language OR Postpone repeating language studied in middle school until 10 <sup>th</sup> grade
Successful completion of two years of middle school Modern language program with a final passing grade in eighth grade in the eight grade year	Continue in second year of same language OR Begin a new language (will require 2 years of the same language for College entrance)
Failure to complete a Modern language program in middle school	Repeat language in ninth grade or begin a new language OR Postpone Modern language study until 10 <sup>th</sup> grade

For students not Enrolled in Middle School Modern Language

Eighth Grade Language Arts	Ninth Grade Placement
A, B, or C average	Enroll in any Modern language offered or wait to begin Modern language the 10 <sup>th</sup> grade year
D average or below	Wait until 10 <sup>th</sup> grade



**Modern language is required for admission to colleges in the University System of Georgia.**

# Testing

The following chart explains the standardized testing that is done in middle school:

Test	Purpose of Test
CRCT	The criterion referenced test that is given to 6th and 8th grade students. More information is available on the Counseling Program website under Testing.
ITBS	This nationally norm-referenced test is given to students in the eighth grade. The ITBS test assesses reading, language arts, math, science and social studies. See Testing on the Counseling Program website for detailed information.
MGWA	The Middle Grades Writing Assessment (MGWA), administered in grade 8, consists of an evaluation of the student's response to an assigned prompt. The prompt type may be narrative, persuasive, or expository. For additional information see Testing on the Counseling Program website.

# Career Planning

## National Standards for Career Development

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has established national standards for school counseling programs that equate career development with academic and personal/social development as the most important factors in student success. These are the ASCA standards for career development:

**Standard A.** Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self, and to make informed career decisions.

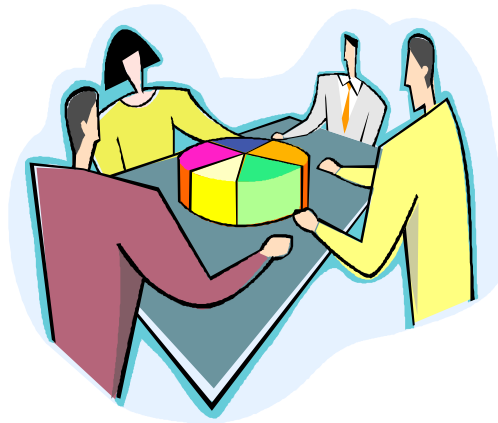
**Standard B.** Students will employ strategies to achieve future career success and satisfaction.

**Standard C.** Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education and training, and the world of work.

## The World of Work in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

Work situations and skills needed for employment will constantly change

- Almost half of the working population will change jobs during a three year period
- Retraining and upgrading skills will be required in most careers
- Two-thirds of the jobs will require education beyond high school
- Students need to have a tentative career plan in place by the time they end the first semester of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year.



## Helping Your Middle School Student Plan for a Career:

- ✚ Discuss your student's skills, interests, abilities, and goals to begin planning for the future.
- ✚ Encourage good work habits at home.
- ✚ Increase responsibilities gradually.
- ✚ Help your student make the connection between education and careers.
- ✚ Talk with your student about your own work, and/or the work of friends, neighbors, and/or relatives.
- ✚ Allow children to explore their interests by using the local library.
- ✚ Help your child begin thinking about the choices they will make in high school that will impact their career choices.
- ✚ Get information about the middle and high school courses your student will need to pursue their interests.
- ✚ Help your student find ways to volunteer for a charity or community organization.
- ✚ Look at newspapers and job opportunities with your student. Investigate the changing job market.
- ✚ When your student is 13, he/she may utilize the GACollege.411 website for career exploration. This is an excellent career planning tool. [www.GACollege411.com](http://www.GACollege411.com)



*"There is no future in any job. The future lies in the man who holds the job."*

George Crane

***School counselors will be assisting your student during the middle school years in developing an individualized career plan.***

# Personal and Social Issues

## National Standards for Personal/Social

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has established national standards for school counseling programs that will help students acquire respect for self and others, goal setting and goal-attainment skills and survival and safety skills. These are the ASCA standards for the personal/social counseling domain:

**Standard A.** Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

**Standard B.** Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.

**Standard C.** Students will understand safety and survival skills.

Middle school students have a lot of ups and downs with their friends. They often leave home with one “best friend” and return home the same afternoon with a different “best friend”. Help your child understand that people are special and unique and have differences of opinion. Friends may even become angry at each other, but that does not have to mean that the friendship is over. Remind your child that one problem does not have to end a relationship. Working through conflicts is an important life skill. Teach your child the value of compromise and when it is appropriate to end a friendship. Middle school students have to learn that being “best friends” isn’t always smooth sailing.



Middle school students are faced with positive and negative peer pressure. Help your child maintain a positive self-concept and encourage your student to use their influence to inspire others to do the right thing. Reinforce with your student that our differences are what make us unique. While most middle school students want to be different, they are more likely to conform to the values of the group if they are not self-confident. Know the group of friends your student has acquired. Role-play situations with your child and help them determine solutions that are in line with your family values. Give your child permission to use you as an excuse when faced with situations involving negative peer pressure. Knowing that you are always there for them will create a safety net for your student.

# Middle School Athletics

## Paulding County member schools participate in:

Cheerleading  
Football  
Girls Softball  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls and Boys Basketball  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls and Boys Basketball  
Boys and Girls Soccer

Admissions to Athletic Events: There is a charge for adults and students for events. Playoff or tournament events have the same admission charges as regular season games.

### **Eligibility:**

*Age Limitation:* A student may not turn 16 years old prior to the last scheduled event of the season. For a team that consists of only 7<sup>th</sup> grade players, a student cannot turn 15 years old prior to the last scheduled event of the season. However, he or she could play on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade team.

*Physical Examination:* To be eligible, a student must pass a physical examination by a M.D. or D.O. licensed in Georgia. Those students who try out for athletic teams must have their physical completed before participating in activities. Since managers are not required to have physicals, they should never be allowed to practice or play.

*Length of Eligibility:* A student shall have two years of eligibility to participate in Middle School athletics **after** his/her 6<sup>th</sup> grade year. One year to participate as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader and one year to participate as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader.

*Academics:* A student who is retained and has to repeat a grade is ineligible for the next semester. A student must pass a minimum of four out of five academic and one of two connections classes. If a student fails two academic classes they are ineligible.

*Attendance:* Students who accumulate five or more unexcused absences in a semester are ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities for the following semester.

# Characteristics of Middle School Children

There is not a "typical" middle school student. Every student remains an individual with strengths and concerns. Early adolescence begins around age ten. This is the time when a child changes in four areas--intellectual, physical, behavioral, and social. The concerns and needs of early adolescence are distinct, yet each child is an individual with unique characteristics.



## Intellectual

- ❖ Are reflective, analytical, and introspective regarding thoughts and feelings
- ❖ Moving from concrete facts to thinking in more abstract ways
- ❖ Intensely curious
- ❖ Prefers active learning and working in groups with peers
- ❖ Enjoys meaningful learning – developing skills that relate to real life
- ❖ Exhibits independent, critical thought
- ❖ Personal-social concerns are primary; academic goals are secondary
- ❖ Experience meta-cognition – understand what they know and do not know



## Physical

- ❖ Increases in height, weight, heart size, lung capacity, and muscular strength
- ❖ Mature at varying rates – girls earlier than boys, typically
- ❖ Lack of coordination due to uneven muscle/bone development
- ❖ Marked differences in development among children
- ❖ Experience changes in metabolism
- ❖ Appearance becomes more important

## Behavioral/Emotional

- ❖ Are asking themselves, "Who am I?"
- ❖ Behaviors can fluctuate from anxiety and fear to bravado and superiority
- ❖ Chemical and hormonal imbalances create range in emotions
- ❖ Moody, restless, self-conscious, and introspective

- ❖ Basically optimistic, hopeful
- ❖ Searching for adult identity, even when peer groups are very important
- ❖ Take risks and love danger and adventure; feel immortal
- ❖ Will cry easily and frequently and can quickly be offended by criticism
- ❖ Needs time to grow up emotionally as well as physically – the body will outgrow the mind
- ❖ Extremely sensitive to criticism, yet highly self-critical
- ❖ Overreacts to any form of rejection and often feels inadequate
- ❖ Hides true feelings behind sarcasm or silence or humor

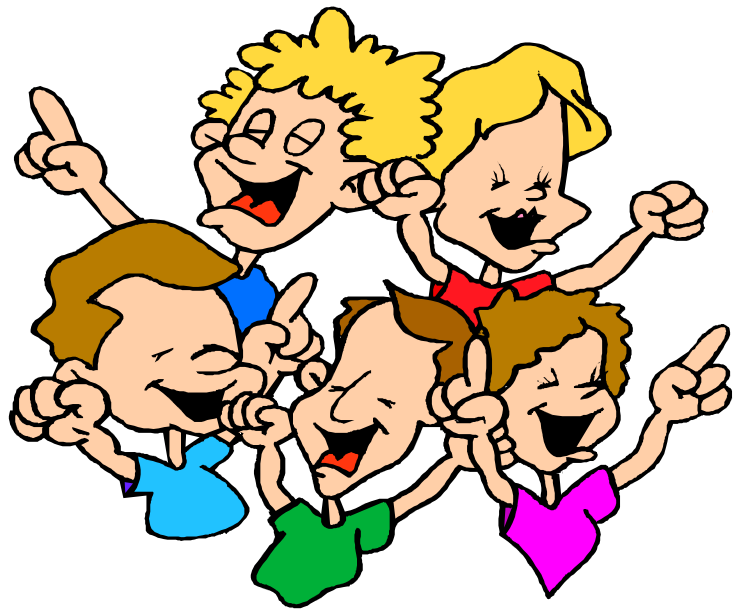


## **Social**

- ❖ Refer to peers for standards and models of behavior
- ❖ Rebellious toward parents, yet still impacted by family values
- ❖ Loyal to peer group values; very responsive to fads
- ❖ Want to be independent from families; yet still want approval from family members
- ❖ Need love and affirmation from significant adults--teachers and family members
- ❖ Will challenge authority figures; may act out by being aggressive or argumentative
- ❖ Worry a lot about what their friends think about them
- ❖ Search to establish positive social relationships with members of the opposite sex
- ❖ Want increased rights and responsibilities, but frequently won't be able to handle them

## Concerns of Middle School Students

- Appearance and peer status
- Being able to open the lockers
- Being with friends, especially having someone to sit with at lunch
- Finding lockers, classes, and bathrooms
- Getting on the right bus
- Getting through crowded halls
- Getting to class on time
- Keeping up with belongings and the work
- Knowing and following the rules
- Larger school building
- Making new friends
- More responsibility
- More teachers
- No free time during the school day
- Peer Pressure
- Physical differences in peers
- Safety issues such as bullies and harassment
- Social status



## Parent Involvement

Parental involvement in middle school is important to the success of your student and the school. Parents need not mistakenly believe that this is the time for them to withdraw from the educational process and let their student become completely independent. While developing



independence is crucial for the young person, there is a difference in dominating your student and providing prudent guidance. In fact, research shows that students whose parents stay involved in their education and keep their student connected to school activities have students who are more successful in school. Grades and test results are higher, students' attitudes and behaviors are more positive, academic programs are more successful, and the schools are more effective. Becoming involved in your student's education at this age can be a big job, but it is well worth it. Quality education now will be the key to obtaining good jobs over the next several decades for your student.

### How can you get involved?

- ❖ Get to know the teachers and the counselors at the middle school
- ❖ Read all information about school policies and curriculum carefully
- ❖ Get involved in PTSA
- ❖ Volunteer at the school – there are many ways that you can assist the school without having direct contact with your student, i.e., media center, grounds committee, fundraisers, chaperone field trips, proctor during standardized testing, etc.
- ❖ Participate in committees or parent groups at the school
- ❖ Go to school whenever you are invited. Whether it is parent-teacher conference week, a band concert, a school play, or a parent meeting, attend every event possible at the school.



## What parents need to know.....

### The first 10 days of school.....

- ❑ **Make certain you have taken care of immunization requirements.** The state of Georgia Department of Human Resources requires that all sixth grade students show proof of meeting current immunization requirements on Form 3231. Students entering sixth grade must have had two MMR vaccines and show proof of immunity to varicella. Most students require a new immunization certificate before entering middle school. This can be obtained from your physician or from the local board of health.
- ❑ Find out the names of building administrators and counselors along with phone numbers.
- ❑ Know your student's team name.
- ❑ Know your student's core teachers (language arts, math, science, and social studies).
- ❑ Ask the time of day for electives or connections courses.
- ❑ Know that core teachers may have conference times available during connections times.
- ❑ Ask your student about their lunch schedule.
- ❑ Be certain that you understand the middle school dress code.
- ❑ Get information about your student's bus number, bus route and driver.
- ❑ Find out what communication you can expect for the school--newsletters, web-sites, etc.
- ❑ Know the procedures for having medication administered during the school day.

### Throughout the year

- ❑ Middle schools have one parent-teacher conference week each year during the Fall Semester, usually in October.
- ❑ If your student is absent from school, he/she is responsible for making up all missed assignments.
- ❑ Middle schools welcome parent volunteers!
- ❑ Middle school students have one or more lockers. Students may be assigned a hall locker and/or a physical education locker. Locks are provided at the school and additional locks are not permitted.
- ❑ Middle schools dress codes are different from those of most elementary schools. All students are expected to dress in a manner that demonstrates respect of the learning environment. See the student handbook for more detailed information.
- ❑ Parents may establish a lunch account for their student.



- Many schools provide a supply list for students and these can often be found on the school web site.
- All Paulding County schools (K-12) adhere to a strict policy prohibiting harassment and/or bullying. Students are also expected to follow an established behavior management plan.



- Middle schools offer a variety of clubs and activities for students. Encourage your student to get involved!
- Middle schools typically separate students by grade level. Sixth grade students rarely interact with seventh or eighth grade students.
- **Organization and time management are vital components** to your student's adjustment to middle school.
- Communication is the key to success in middle school. Communication with your student and his/her teachers will help your child achieve academic as well as career and personal/social success in middle school.

## Tips for Middle School Parents

Parents are by far the most important teachers our children will ever have, and they learn primarily from what we do, not what we say. It will be hard for your student to be caring if you are unconcerned; for them to be positive, if you are dismal; for them to love, if they feel unloved. Show interest in your student's work. Let them know that it is important and that you have high expectations for them. Be willing to help them with their work, but not to do it for them. There is no substitute for spending time with children. Not just "quality" time, occasionally, but lots of time...time to work, time to play, time to laugh, and time to bond with each other. Enjoy the middle school years!

- Be consistent. Set firm, clear rules and stick to them!
- Don't believe that, "everybody else gets to. . . ."
- Have comfortable conversations with your student. Talk with your child and listen. Avoid talking "to" them. Listen to your student as you talk together each day offering praise and encouragement. Listen to the unspoken messages, just as intently as you do the spoken messages.
- Give your student an appropriate amount of freedom and responsibility.
- Spend time as a family unit.
- Be sure criticism is constructive and not destructive.
- Follow through. Don't make idle threats. If you say that they cannot go to a friends on Friday, then stick with that statement.
- Never be afraid to say "NO!" Never be afraid to check out where they are going and when they will be home.
- Distinguish between, "I don't like you," and "I don't like your behavior."
- Be sure you apply rewards and consequences in a firm, fair, and appropriate manner.
- Listen when your student wants to talk to you. It may not be the best time for you, but stop and listen. Typically, they know when you are preoccupied with something else.
- Work to build a relationship of mutual respect and trust.
- Help your student find activities in which he or she excels. It is extremely important that students have a school connection--sports, band, and performing arts are all good school connectors.
- Help your child accept and like who they are.
- Set realistic goals and expectations with your child.
- Know what is going on at school. Parents who volunteer at school feel more connected to their student because they know what is going on at school.
- Check your student's homework, book bag, and notebook daily.
- Know who your student's friends are, where their time is spent, and what they spend their money on.
- Encourage your child to try new things, learn new skills.
- Tell them that it is OK to fail and act that way when they do fail.
- Teach them that making mistakes is a part of learning and that learning takes effort, time and practice. Get help when you need it. Be patient! Success doesn't happen overnight.



# School Personnel



## Administration

The administration of a middle school usually consists of a principal, one or more assistant principals, and/or one or more administrative assistants. The administration has many responsibilities including the operation of the school as well as a positive learning environment for students. Administrators are there every step of the way to support students in the valuable learning process. These school officials work to ensure the success and safety of the learning community. They are valuable assets to the school and community!

## Counselors

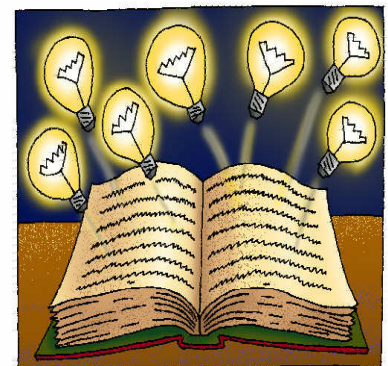
The Middle School Counseling Program is part of the Paulding County Comprehensive Counseling Program and mirrors the framework of the American School Counselor's Association National model. The program supports students in three counseling domains--academic, career, and personal social. The program is developmental and proactive as it builds on the counseling program established in the elementary school and prepares students for the high school counseling program. The focus of the counseling program facilitates student learning and academic success. Like the elementary and high school levels, there are four delivery system services--school guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services and system support. Middle school counselors are available to work with students, parents, and teachers through guidance, counseling, consultation services, and referrals.

## Graduation Coach

The middle school graduation coach supports students through whole school, target group, and case management or individualized strategies. The graduation coach works in collaboration with counselors, administrators, teachers, students, and parents to ensure that middle school students succeed in three life areas: academic, career, and personal social. Graduation coaches provide career classroom guidance support to all students. In addition, the mission of the middle school graduation coach is to ensure that all students have a successful transition not only from elementary to middle school, but also, from middle to high school. Graduation coaches provide both prevention and intervention for at-risk middle school students and help them prepare for high school and their post-secondary career.

## Media Specialist

The media specialist in the middle school can help your student with much more than locating a library book. They are often experts in research and technology and can provide a variety of services for students, parents, and teachers.



## Teachers

Middle School Teachers involve students in the learning process through a variety of teaching techniques. The classroom is positive with teachers accepting a variety of learning styles and an acceptance and understanding of each student's differences. Teachers have a genuine concern for all children and help every student to "focus on learning".

## The Transition

### Differences in Elementary & Middle Schools

Elementary School	Middle School
One teacher and classroom	Different teachers and classrooms
Expectations that students are used to with frequent reminders from teachers	Expectations may be different and students are given more responsibility
Belongings stored in the classroom with teacher assistance	Students have specific place or locker to store belongings
Same students in each class	Different students in each class
Many of the same students kindergarten through fifth grade	Students coming from different schools. New opportunities to make friends.
Limited choices	Choices for clubs, organizations, band, chorus, orchestra, and intramurals.
Work is completed in class with some homework.	Students receive more homework and must learn how to organize book bags, lockers, materials, and their time.
Testing CRCT 1st - 5th Grades Writing 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grades ITBS 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grades	Testing CRCT 6th - 8th grades Writing 8 <sup>th</sup> grade ITBS 6 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grades

## Web-sites

### Academics and Education

- <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us> - Georgia Department of Education This site offers more than 7,000 pages of educational materials.
- [www.paulding.k12.ga.us](http://www.paulding.k12.ga.us)- Paulding County School District - Here you will find current information regarding county policies, curriculum, and links to individual schools. Click on Counseling Program for K-12 information
- <http://www.education-world.com/students/study/index.shtml> -Education World - Study Skills and Homework Help
- <http://www.middleweb.com/Homework.html> - homework sites
- <http://www.how-to-study.com> - Designed to help students do better in school
- [www.schooldiscovery.com](http://www.schooldiscovery.com) - Another extremely useful resource is Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators, which has a "homework helper" section with links to all sorts of educational resources

### Career Planning

- [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) - Information to aid in the transition from high school to college.
- [www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org) – Information about college, technical college, careers, etc.
- [www.jobprofiles.com](http://www.jobprofiles.com) - Learn about a wide variety of careers from the people who are working in those jobs.
- [www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco) - Search by keyword, index, or occupational cluster.
- [www.math.unl.edu/~nmsi/tQ2/3index1.html](http://www.math.unl.edu/~nmsi/tQ2/3index1.html) - Designed to help students think about futures in math, science, and technology.
- [www.ulinks.com/main.html](http://www.ulinks.com/main.html) - Virtual tours of universities.
- [www.vocabulary.com](http://www.vocabulary.com) - Vocabulary is extremely important in SAT exams, and you can brush up on your skills on this site.
- [www.WorkmanWeb.com](http://www.WorkmanWeb.com) - More definitions and SAT test-taking advice.
- [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com) - More definitions and SAT test-taking advice. [www.gomath.com](http://www.gomath.com) - Free math help using simple animation to bring problems and solutions to life.



## General Educational Resources

- <http://www.pta.org/commonsense> - Strategies for raising alcohol and drug-free children provided by National PTA.
- [www.nagc.org/parentinfo/index.html](http://www.nagc.org/parentinfo/index.html) - Includes characteristics of various areas of giftedness.
- <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/cise/ose/parents> - Information for parents whose children are in special education classes.
- [www.parentingteens.com](http://www.parentingteens.com) - A newsletter with valuable ideas for parents.
- [www.talkingwithkids.org](http://www.talkingwithkids.org) - An overview of the health concerns facing many young people
- [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) - United States Department of Education
- <http://ericeece.org/midlink.html> - This page lists Internet sites that focus on (or have some section that focuses on) middle level education or the development of adolescents.

## Safety on the Internet

- [www.safekids.com/contract.htm](http://www.safekids.com/contract.htm) - Family contract for online safety. Guidelines for parents and their children.
- [www.safeteens.com/safeteens.htm](http://www.safeteens.com/safeteens.htm) - Teen safety on the information highway. Learn about the dangers so that the positive aspects of the internet can be enjoyed.



*The process of becoming who we truly are brings forth infinite, ever-changing possibilities. The human journey that we share with our children and with each other is one of constant creation and recreation. We must all be patient with one another and allow our children to shine as brightly as the stars in the night sky!*