



What is different about middle school?

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

More Work

It may seem overwhelming, but we are here to help you! If you find yourself struggling, be sure to talk with your parents, teachers, and/or school counselor.

Locked-Up

You now get your own locker in the hallway! The best part? You get to have a special place for all your belongings and can decorate it with photos, drawings, and anything else that makes it feel personal to YOU! The worst part? It can be hard to remember which locker is yours and what the combination is. Be sure to write your locker number and combination down in a safe place that will always be with you, such as your planner.



The A-B-Cs

Chances are, you will be graded with the letter system: A, B, C, D, and E. There are also in-between grades like "B+" or "C-". This may seem more competitive and you may find yourself comparing grades with your friends or classmates. Remember that *your* grades are *your* business and if you do not want to share your grades with them, you do not have to!

Media Center Heaven

Most media centers are more than just books – they might also have computers, video stations, and other forms of media to help you learn. It is a great location to do your homework, study for a test, or gather research for a project.

The Fun Stuff

Extracurricular activities are a great way to meet new people, find new interests, and have lots of fun! Check out what extracurricular activities your school has to offer. There is something for everyone!

On Schedule

A different class, in a different room, every hour? Yikes! The new middle school schedule can seem scary at first! You will probably adjust in no time, but new buildings and new routines are confusing for everyone. Do not forget to ask an adult (parent, teacher, counselor, or other staff member) if you need help!

Say Bye-Bye to Recess

Recess was probably your favorite part of the day in elementary school, right? So how will you survive without it? Lunch time is a perfect time to relax and socialize with your friends. Extracurricular activities are also a great way to unwind and have fun with your friends!

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A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Transitioning into middle school can be very anxiety-provoking for students. Below are some common concerns that your child may have and ideas for what you can do to help!

Tough Classes

Your child may be afraid that there will be too much reading or homework at the middle school, or they will not get good enough grades. There is nothing wrong with acknowledging that the work will be harder, as it may be. However, assure your child that it will not be any more than she/he can handle and encourage your child to let you and the teacher know if he/she is falling behind. This will allow you to arrange extra help for your child either before/after school or with a tutor.

Not Having Friends

Going to a new school can be very intimidating. Not only is it a new building, but it is full of people your child has never met before. Help identify your child's fears and put them into perspective. For example, "You had friends at your old school, what would keep you from having friends at this school?" Help get your child involved in an extracurricular activity, such as a sport or club. These are great opportunities for students to get to know one another and make friends!

Combination Locks

Many students are afraid that they will forget where their locker is, will forget their combination, or will not be able to get their locker open. Understand that this fear is very common and not necessarily unfounded, as students have limited time between classes. Try buying a combination lock during the summer so your child can practice before starting school. Also help your child find a safe place to write down his/her locker number and combination, someplace so he/she will have it with them at all times (such as in a planner).

Being Late & Getting Lost

Many students are afraid of getting marked tardy or getting in trouble for being late. No one wants to get in trouble because they were not fast enough! Reassure your child that he/she is not alone, and brainstorm ways to simplify the process of switching classes. This may include keeping their locker organized or knowing who to ask if he/she is lost. You can also do a walk-through before the school year starts! This is a great time for your child to find out where his/her classes are and how long it will take him/her to get from one classroom to another.

Being Too Different

There are very few things worse for a middle schooler than standing out in a way they have not chosen. Maybe they are much taller/shorter than their peers, or they do not have the latest fashion trends. This can make your child feel very insecure. First, understand that this is normal for their age group. This age marks the beginning of their search for an identity. Do not say "that's silly" or "it does not matter". Minimizing your child's feelings will only make him/her feel more alone. Emphasize the positive to boost your child's confidence, such as pointing out what he/she is particularly skilled at!



Most of all, know that you do not always have to give solutions. Sometimes it helps kids just to voice their fears to a sympathetic listener.

For more information on making the move to middle school, check out www.schoolfamily.com!