



CONNECTIONS

5TH GRADE EDITION

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MANATEE COUNTY - 2022



HOW TO HELP WITH THE MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION

Moving on to middle school is an exciting time for both parents and children! However, there are many anxieties and fears to navigate. Middle schools are typically larger than elementary schools; there are more teachers to work with, all with their own expectations and personalities, along with more and harder schoolwork! It is important that parents tell their child it is normal to be nervous and you will help them adjust to this new experience together.

Don't be overly anxious yourself about your child going to middle school. He/she will take cues from you and if you express worries, your child will hear you and be even more apprehensive. The message you want to give your child is that you are confident he/she can handle the new situation. Asserting confidence and helpful support will go a long way in helping the transition to middle school.

WHAT'S INSIDE

What parents need to know about middle school

Student friendly information to help with your transition to middle school

Resources to help with the transition to middle school



ORIENTATION

- Attend orientation/open houses at the middle school with your child. Taking time to be familiar with the buildings and campus will help decrease anxiety about not knowing where to go and what to expect the first day of school! ASK FOR HELP!
- Your middle school may have a course schedule pick-up time before the first day of school. This is an opportunity to find out what your child's schedule is and get an early start on needed school supplies.
- Read all material sent home with your child. It is critical to familiarize yourself with the information in the school's handbook or on the school website. This will help you and your child understand the rules, responsibilities, and procedures of school life.
- Some schools require students to wear uniforms and others do not. Check the school website for more details. For those schools that do not require uniforms, there is a district dress code policy for all students. You can find this in your student handbook and the District Code of Student Conduct.
- Students are required to have an ID badge and wear it daily. Many schools use these badges for students to purchase lunch, check out library books, etc.
- Important school and district dates will be announced at orientation and can be helpful in planning family activities. Dates regarding progress reports and report cards will be specified as well. Keeping up with your child's progress in school is the responsibility of every parent. This information can also be found on each school's website.
- Student grades are available electronically through the FOCUS Parent Portal. Parents will receive information regarding this process from the school.

Attention **5th graders!**

You will receive information regarding middle school registration from your new middle school. Some schools communicate through Schoology Groups so be on the lookout for any invitations or information from your new middle school.

SCHEDULE

- Your child will have 6-7 teachers each day. Students will change classes for the different subject areas. Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies are required of all students in the 6th grade. Often, classes are no more than 22 students.
- The core subjects are required every year in middle school and a student must pass these classes to exit middle school. Core subjects not passed must be repeated.
- Students are also required to have regularly scheduled physical education (P.E.).
- Students are encouraged to explore interests by taking courses or participating in clubs.
- In some middle schools, students are placed on "teams", which means the core academic teachers all work together to meet the individual needs of their students.
- Middle school also involves extracurricular activities. Various clubs, like TSA and FFA, and sports programs including cross country, volleyball, soccer, flag football and basketball may be of interest to your child. Encourage him/her to explore and pursue interests and to develop a time management plan using his/her school planner as a guide.
- **Your student's schedule may change after school begins.** Class size limits must be met and the students may be required to take specific courses based on test scores and other factors.

Students are required to complete:

- Three (3) middle school or higher courses in Language Arts. These courses will emphasize literature, composition and technical text.
- Three (3) middle school or higher courses in Mathematics.
- Three (3) middle school or higher courses in Social Studies, to include the study of state and federal government and civics education.
- Three (3) middle school or higher courses in Science.
- Physical Education or an approved P.E. waiver each year.
- Completion of a 4-year academic plan.
- Meet requirements on all state assessments, including FSA and End of Course (EOC) exams.

Class of 2029



Your child's march across the graduation stage is just around the corner. As you look to the future and start making plans, here are some things to consider.

Students must meet specific criteria to graduate from high school.

Current legislation requires that:

- Students must successfully complete 24 credits to graduate or 18 credits in ACCEL. Some of those credits are in specific academic and elective areas.
- Students are required to complete 1 online course.
- Students must maintain a 2.0 grade point average (GPA).
- Students must pass all required State Assessments.

Visit <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/graduation-requirements/> for more information on graduation requirements.

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The choices you make in middle school will affect your path during and after high school.

- Qualified students can take high school courses in middle school.
- Consider taking advanced courses in middle school. This could lead to more rigorous courses in high school.
- Students should develop good study habits and set long term goals.
- Students should access tutoring offerings or speak with his/her teacher for extra supports if needed.
- Parents can stay informed by visiting www.fldoe.org and your child's school website.
- Students can participate in extra-curricular activities during middle and high school.
- Students should start to find volunteer opportunities in areas that interest them.

STUDY HABITS

- Help your child set up a study place, time and routine at home. Organization is the key to academic success. Most schools provide a student planner in which your child should record his or her assignments for each subject area. This is a way for you and your child to keep up with assignments on a daily basis and to plan for long range projects.
- Most importantly, encourage your child's efforts. Like adults, children are motivated by sincere praise rather than criticism. Not everyone can earn an "A" all the time. It is important to have reasonable expectations and work with your child on setting goals for his/her school progress. Everyone can achieve in his/her own way. Praise for progress, not for perfection. Call and schedule a teacher-parent conference if you have concerns about your child's progress.
- Students are also graded on their conduct while in school and at school functions. Parents should discuss the schools rules and the tenets of respectful behavior with their student.

WANTED Students with good grades and good conduct
BE IN

RENAISSANCE!

Renaissance is a program that rewards students with excellent academic and conduct grades. Students who qualify for the program are eligible for special activities such as breakfasts, picnics, assemblies and field trips (reward activities and eligibility requirements may vary from school to school).

Check with the school counselor for more information.

NOTE-TAKING

Cornell Notes

1. *Causes of War*

- a.
- b.

This is an outline. The teacher has given a hint that he or she will be using an outline to talk about a topic. Other times the teacher will use clues such as, "There are three main causes for this." This lets you know that there will be a list or an outline of three things. Sometimes the teacher will provide guided notes that the student is expected to fill in as things are discussed in class.

Note-taking does not mean that you have to write every word a teacher says. You can shorten your sentences and use abbreviations as long as the meaning is not lost. Learn to use abbreviation like WH for world history or pres. for president.

A bookbag or backpack is useful for carrying notebooks and other supplies. Usually you will not need to carry books. Books often go home with you and stay there so they are always available for homework assignments.

Some students will be taking notes for the first time. Teachers provide hints and create outlines to help you begin to learn this very important skill.

Assignments or homework are activities your teacher gives you to practice what was done in the class.

Studying is your way of remembering information that is going to be on a test.

STUDY OR HOMEWORK?

When you study, you **reread** or **review** material you have read before. Rereading is faster than reading the first time and you are looking for key phrases and words. Often those words are underlined or in **bold** or *italic*.

After reviewing, you can **self-test** by covering up a section and see if you remember the information. If you are learning vocabulary, try making flash cards with the word on one side and the definition on the other side

A family member can help you **practice test** by asking you questions from your book, homework and worksheets. They don't have to be an expert in the subject because you are giving them the information they need.

Preparing for a test should be done several times. Schedule it in your agenda. If the teacher tells you Monday that you will have a test on Friday, spend 15-20 minutes each night **rereading, reviewing, self-testing and practice testing** so you aren't cramming.

You will have homework almost every night. It is best to get into a habit of doing it at the same time - right after school or right after dinner. Set a a schedule and keep it. If you have a busy schedule, then you will need to plan and use your time well. Ask your parents to help you stick to a schedule. **Write it down and stick to it!**

PARENTAL SUPPORT

- Be patient, be kind, and understand that your child is now at the age where he/she is dealing with many changes - physically, socially, and emotionally. Peer relationships become a focus for students of this age and navigating the social realm is often a bumpy ride for everyone!
- Get to know your child's friends.
- Help your child have a positive sense of self. Peer pressure can be both positive and negative and your child needs to know how to deal with negative situations. Make it clear they can always come to you with an issue. Contact the administration and/or the school counseling office if you need their help with your child.
- All schools have a safety plan and procedures, including bullying and sexual harassment. Encourage your child to follow these procedures. Talk with your child about these very important issues.
- Schools should be safe havens for all students. Encourage your child to report unwanted behavior such as bullying, harassment, and other concerning issues.
- **BE INVOLVED!** Attend PTO/SAC meetings at the school. The more involved you are in the school, the better you will be informed of school life and the more help you can offer your child. Studies have shown that achievement increases with greater parent involvement at school.

Frequently Asked Questions

MAKING THE JUMP FROM ELEMENTARY TO MIDDLE SCHOOL CAN BE SCARY AT FIRST, AND YOUR CHILD MIGHT HAVE LOTS OF QUESTIONS. HERE ARE SOME COMMON QUESTIONS THAT WILL HELP YOU PREPARE TO GUIDE THEM TO ANSWERS.

- How will I find time to get all my homework and studying done?
- What kinds of new responsibilities will I have now that I'm in middle school?
- Will teachers expect a lot more out of students now?
- Can I get involved with school teams and clubs, even if it means staying at school longer?

Important!

It is vital to the academic success of students that they are in attendance each day. If a student must be absent, parents need to call the attendance line of the school. If the absence will be for an extended period of time, the parent must request any work that will be missed, as students are responsible to make up all missed work due to absences.

STUDENTS MUST REPORT TO THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE IF THEY ARRIVE LATE TO SCHOOL.

If students need to leave early, they must be signed out by a parent or guardian through the attendance office. Please notify the school of the need for early dismissal by sending a note for the attendance secretary with your student.

OTHER TIPS

- Stay in touch with the teachers
- Volunteer at your child's school
- Ask questions about work completed at school
- Set a routine for completing homework and projects
- Know dates for progress reports/report cards and where to access them online
- Have your child at school every day **on time**
- Be involved in school related activities
- Check your child's backpack and agenda
- Praise progress and effort
- Contact your child's school counselor with any concerns

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be maintained for participation in interscholastic sports and/or extracurricular activities. That means it is very important to keep good grades.



TYPICAL SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST

Each school and teacher may require different supplies. Students will receive an official list from the school.

- Notebook paper
- Pens/Pencils
- Colored pencils
- Folders
- Ruler
- Spiral notebook
- Calculator
- Markers
- Glue stick
- Erasers
- Tissues
- 3-ring binder



TAKE STOCK IN CHILDREN

Take Stock in Children (TSIC) is a powerful and proven life-changing scholarship and mentoring program that provides hope and the promise of a better future for Florida's students. It is designed to impact the major elements of a young child's life: family, school, and community beginning as early as the sixth grade. There are specific income requirements, among other criteria to qualify. Visit <http://takestockmanatee.org/> for more information.

The University of Cambridge in England formed Cambridge Assessment over 150 years ago. And, now over 10,000 schools in the world have implemented this prestigious curriculum. Buffalo Creek Middle School is one of these distinguished schools. Learning at BCMS is focused on the 5 core objectives of Cambridge: Confidence, Responsibility, Reflection, Innovation and Engagement. There is a strong emphasis on critical thinking, analysis, interpretation, writing and collaboration; all skills needed for success in today's society. Students have the opportunity to apply to the Cambridge Academy as well. This cohort of students are brought together through high level coursework adapted from the Cambridge philosophy. Teachers stress the impact of global themes in this cohort that includes instruction helping prepare students for high school level classes that are offered here in their 8th grade year. One unique course offered at Buffalo Creek is our Pre-AICE Global Perspectives class. This class is a high school credit course that allows students to work together to problem solve and research big Global ideas. By the time students leave BCMS, they can earn up to



**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Cambridge International School

7 high school credits to take with them to any high school program. For more information about Buffalo Creek Middle School's Cambridge Program visit their [website](#).

Louise R. Johnson K-8 School of International Studies offers the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, which is specifically designed for students during the adolescent stages and provides them a challenging curriculum, including a foreign language each year. Eight subjects - Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, Physical Education, Art, Technology, and a Foreign Language (Spanish or French) are required each year. IB learners strive to be inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers, knowledgeable, principled, open-minded, caring, balanced, and reflective. These ten principles, known as the Learner Profile, are the basis of preparing students for life in the 21st century. For more information about the IB Programme, visit their [website](#).



**International
Baccalaureate**

Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a program that targets students in the academic middle, with the goal of post-secondary education admission and success, and provides them the support while encouraging them to embark on a more rigorous curriculum. The mission of AVID is to develop and foster a culture of college readiness for all students. Students will be enrolled in the AVID elective course, where they will learn about post-secondary options and the necessary path one must travel to be a viable candidate for such educational opportunities. The students will set personal and educational goals to meet that challenge. The AVID elective will provide academic



support in the form of new strategies for deeper learning and regular tutoring that is based on an inquiry model. Students will also have an opportunity for affective and social growth and team building activities. AVID is not offered at all middle schools, so visit your school's website for more information.

WHAT DO STUDENTS WANT TO KNOW?

How long will my school day be?

Most school hours are 9:20-4:10 but K-8 schools are 8:25-3:15.

What subjects will I need to take?

The courses you will need are highlighted on page 3.

How long do I have for lunch?

Students typically have 30 minutes to get and eat their lunch.

What kind of supplies will I need?

See the sample supply list on page 7.

How many students will be in my classes?

Most core classes will have no more than 22 students.

Will there be any after-school activities?

All schools will have clubs or other activities that you can join. Be sure to look for these opportunities at orientation.

Will I be changing classes?

Yes, you will have at least 7 different classes in a school day.

Will there be any sports teams at middle school?

Most schools offer intramural sports after school.

Do I have to use an agenda?

Some schools will provide an agenda to help with organization and time management. If not, you may want to purchase your own.

Do I have to change for P.E.?

Yes, most schools require you to "dress out".

What if I get lost?

Typically, classes are in the same area of the school. There are many adults in the halls in case you need some help. Just ask!

WWW.MANATEESCHOOLS.NET

SCHOOL WEBSITES

Braden River MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/bradenrivermiddle>

Buffalo Creek MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/buffalocreek>

Carlos E. Haile MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/haile>

Dr. Mona Jain MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/jain>

Electa Arcotte Lee Magnet MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/lee>

Lincoln Memorial Academy

<https://www.manateeschools.net/lincoln>

Louise R. Johnson K-8 School

<https://www.manateeschools.net/johnson>

Martha B. King MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/king>

Palm View School

<https://www.manateeschools.net/PALMVIEW>

R. Dan Nolan MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/nolan>

W.D. Sugg MS

<https://www.manateeschools.net/sugg>

helpful websites

<https://www.kidsinthehouse.com/>

Parenting site for advice from babies to college and beyond.

<https://biglifejournal.com/>

Growth Mindset site with free and paid resources.

<https://kidskonnnect.com/>

Worksheets to supplement all curricular areas.

<https://www.familyfirst.net/>

Positive family site with supporting articles.

<https://www.flvc.org/home>

Florida Virtual education resources.

<https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org>

Financial aid guide, resources and planning.

<https://floridastudents.org/>

Video tutorials of every Florida standard.

<http://fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/just-take-20/>

Resources for incorporating reading at home.



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