

# Taking CHARGE of Middle School



My planning guide for middle school

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(Name)

Everett Public Schools  
5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade Educational Planning Resource

# Just WHAT is Middle School all about?

Middle school is a time where you have more choice, freedom, and responsibility, all of which are part of becoming an adult. This planning guide will help you understand some of the changes and choices you will experience as you enter middle school.

## Important terms

### **Associated Student**

**Body (ASB):** A student representative organization that plans student activities. ASB membership is required to participate in some activities.

**Elective:** A class that you select from a number of options such as band, choir, computer tech or Unified Arts class (UA), which can include art or music class. Choices vary by middle school.

**Orientation:** Before the first day of a school year students are invited to the school to tour the school, engage in activities, and become familiar with the school layout.

**Period:** A set amount of time in which a class is taught. All Everett Middle Schools have seven periods a day (*a period is about 45 minutes*).

**Passing time:** Time between classes. This is the time to walk from one classroom to another.

**Progress report:** A report sent home that lets you and your parents know how you are doing in your classes. Progress Reports show a grade however they are not final. They indicate where you stand at a point in time.

**Report Cards:** A report that is sent home at the end of each semester with the grade that you have earned in each class. These grades are permanent.

**Semester:** The school year is divided into two 18 week grading periods. Each one is called a semester.

**Student ID cards:** Issued at some middle schools to all students and provided at no cost. Use at all school sponsored events.

# Knowing what to expect

Because you will be moving from class to class in middle school, your day may seem busier than before. To become familiar with your school, walk around to find each of your classes so you know your way around the building. Carry your schedule with you for the first few weeks of school so that you know what classes to go to and the room numbers for each class. Adults are always available to help you find your way.

## **Schedule**

When you enroll in an Everett Public Middle School you will have between five and six different teachers, classes or subjects throughout your school day.

Some of your classes will be "blocked". You will stay in the same **classroom** for more than one subject.

For example: you may have english and language arts in the same room.

Many of your classes will be taught in different rooms throughout the school.

For example: PE will be taught in the gym and band will be in the band room.

## **Electives**

Most of you will have the opportunity to take an elective at your middle school. Electives are classes that you CHOOSE to enroll in. You will have one of three choices for your elective, either a music class, or unified arts/ UA class.

- Music classes include band and choir.
- Unified arts are a series of semester-long classes that focus on different aspect of Art, Family & Consumer Sciences, Robotics, Computer Tech., or Industrial Tech., rotating each semester, giving students a range of experiences.

## **Learning Support Classes**

Most Everett Middle Schools have accelerated learning support classes in reading and math. These classes are designed for those students who need additional help to meet standard in reading or in math. Identified students are automatically scheduled for these support courses and they take the place of an elective or another class.

## **PE/Lifetime Fitness**

All Everett Middle Schools offer a physical education or lifetime fitness class EACH day. Students are required to wear a uniform. You may keep your uniform in your PE locker in the locker room and change into your uniform each day. Showers are not mandatory, but are available.

- \* Students may be required to purchase a PE uniform from their school once they register. Make sure to check with YOUR future middle school to see what uniform requirements they have for PE.

## **Lockers**

Because you do not have one desk to use all day, you will be assigned a locker. Many students share lockers at middle school. It is important to practice the lock combination a few times. Store your locker combination where you can get to it easily, just in case you forget it (Your planner is a great place to keep it).

# Organization...your ticket to success



Everybody is different, so there is not one BEST way to organize. However, one thing is CERTAIN, **students who stay organized are more successful in school!**

The tools listed on this page will help you on your road to organization.

## **Notebook/Binder/Accordion Folder:**

You will have up to seven subject areas/ classes. You should have a different section in your note book for EACH subject area or class. Some students use notebooks, other use the plastic accordion envelopes. No matter what system you use:

- make sure that you CLEARLY label each of the sections with the class name.
- Put all of the work for each class together.
- Put your homework in the same place in your notebook each time you finish with it so that you can easily find it when it is time to turn it in.

## **Planner/Assignment Calendar:**

Because you have MORE classes in middle school, it is important that you keep track of your assignments and due dates. Students are required to have and USE a planner.

- Write the class name, the assignment, AND the day the assignment is due.
- If you do not have homework for a given class write "no homework" or "No HW" in your planner. That way when you get home you (and your parents) KNOW that you do not have any homework for that class, that evening.

## **Backpack:**

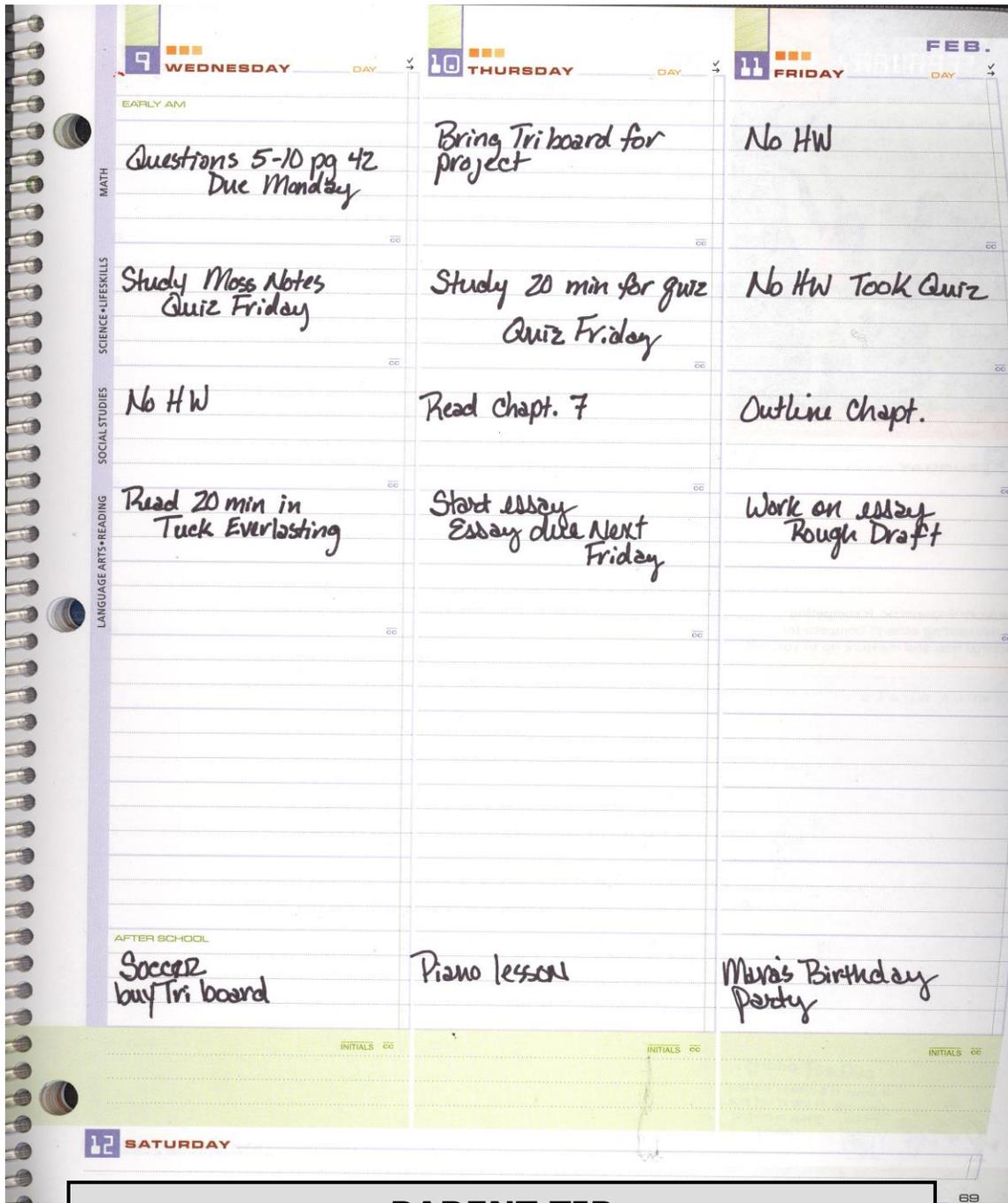
Pack your backpack EACH NIGHT after you have completed your homework. Make sure that you have all your assignments and materials necessary for the following day. It is important to empty your backpack AT LEAST once a week. After you have emptied everything out of it put papers back in your binder or plastic pocket envelope, in the correct place (And don't forget to throw away any food that has started to mold ☺).

### **PARENT TIP**

Students who use a planner or assignment calendar tend to be more successful in school. Review your students' calendar often, and discuss together how their system is working.

# Keep track of your Homework

Keeping track of your assignments in your assignment calendar/planner will help you stay on top of your work. Make sure to include page numbers, materials you need to bring to school and due dates. Make sure you write "No HW" if you do not have a homework assignment.



## PARENT TIP

Share your organizational system with your student. Create a time each day where you model for your student how to keep track of activities, etc. Discuss your students' calendar with them each day.

# Make time for Homework



**Find the best place** to study. Try to move away from the TV to a place with the least distractions. Turn off all electronics.

**Find out if your middle school has a homework club,** or if your teacher has time where he/she provides help outside of class time. Computers and extra help are available after school.

**Exchange phone numbers** with a helpful student in each of your classes. If you get stuck while doing your homework you can make a quick call to get help (Psst...this only works if you talk about homework).

**Break big projects** into smaller steps. Create a timeline starting with the due date and work backwards as you schedule each piece of the project you need to complete. If you need help doing this ask an adult or your teacher.

**Turn in your homework.** Few people go to work each day without expecting a paycheck. If you do your homework, but fail to turn it in - you forfeit your pay...the grade.

- Keep your homework in a place in your binder, or in a special folder, so that it is easy to find.
- Take your homework out right when you enter the class.
- When you turn it in, check it off in your planner.

**Get ready for your day the night before.** Pack your backpack immediately after you finish your homework. Put your backpack in a place where you would trip over it in the morning, if you don't pick it up and bring it with you to school (Ok, we don't want you to trip but we do want you to remember your tools for school!).

## PARENT TIP

- Have your child put their electronics away while doing homework.
- Students should have about one hour of homework each night. If they don't remember their homework check their planner, check a teacher's website, or have them read for an hour.
- Help your child's brain form the habit of studying each evening.



# Keep track of your grades **ONLINE**

There are two ways you can keep track of your assignments. **First** write down each of your assignments along with the due date in your assignment book/planner. Once you've turned in your work you can keep track of your grades online. To register online go to:

## **Student LMS Access**

1. Connect to <https://lms.everettsd.org>
2. Enter your student ID and your network password to log in (The same way you log in to the computer).
3. Once logged in – select **Gradebook** to link to your grades.

It takes approximately two weeks for assignments to be collected, graded, and then recorded online. Online grades give an OVERALL picture. Keeping track of what **you** NEED to do each evening is important.

## **PARENT TIP**

Set up a routine time to sit with your student and check their grades online.

**For Parents and Guardians: Access to online student information is available through Everett Public School's Learning Management System (LMS).**

How to access student information online:

- 1) Schools will electronically link the students you have authorized to the adults you have authorized.
- 2) We will send each of your authorized adults a unique login, user name and temporary password.
- 3) **Once the authorized adults receive their individual login, username and passwords, they log in at <https://lms.everettsd.org>. We recommend that all temporary passwords be updated and personalized after the first login.**

Help your student get into the habit of looking at their grades. If your child is struggling academically, contact the teacher.

# Success takes planning



**During middle school, you will get to explore your interests, skills and strengths and explore how they are connected to your future. You will have the opportunity to explore careers and find out more about which skills and interests you have, and how they might lead you to a future career.**

**Did you know that you could earn high school credit during middle school?**

**Middle School Algebra:** remember, the further you get in math at middle school, the higher you'll be placed in high school. If you meet standard in your middle school Algebra class you may earn a high school credit.

**Geometry:** If you earn high school credit in your middle school Algebra class as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader, you will be eligible to take Geometry in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and earn high school credit.

**Accelerated Coordinated Science:** If you have strong mathematic and science skills, you may be eligible to take this fast paced class in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade that covers the 8<sup>th</sup> grade science standards and the 9<sup>th</sup> grade science standards in one year and earn a high school credit.

**Middle School Washington State History:** If you meet standard in your 7<sup>th</sup> grade WA State History class you do not have to take this class in high school. Meeting standard in WA State will allow you to take a different social studies course in high school, like Psychology, Sociology or History. *Be sure to check with your HS counselor AND the college to which you will apply to make sure you have the correct entrance requirements.*

**9<sup>th</sup> grade English:** If you have strong reading and writing skills, you may choose to take this fast paced and advanced class in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade that covers the 9<sup>th</sup> grade standards and will allow you to earn a high school credit.

You will want to excel in your other classes, too. Your performance in all your classes starting in 6<sup>th</sup> grade will determine your placement in high school classes.

Now that you know that you are in "training for high school and beyond", you will be encouraged to take more responsibility for schoolwork and after-school activities. You will also have a chance to learn about yourself and your potential career interests. So, whether you think you want to go to technical college, community college, four-year college or university, military service, an apprenticeship program or work after high school, concentrate on gaining the skills in middle school to get you there!

## **PARENT TIP**

Your students' middle school study habits are a predictor of high school performance. Encourage them to study or read for at least one hour EVERY evening to get into the habit of studying.

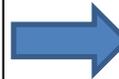
# Will I be ready for high school?... And college or a career?

As you begin middle school, you will spend the next three years preparing for high school, because we know:

- **If you are doing well in eighth-grade, that is the single strongest predictor of college readiness by twelfth-grade.**

## **Two ways to boost success in middle school:**

1. *Good work and study habits, sometimes called academic discipline. It means consistently completing homework, getting to class on time, taking pride and care in school work.*
2. *Positive behavior and attitude.*



**Studies show that those who fail middle school classes are more likely to drop-out of high school.**

## **High School Success Indicators**

**The following levels and indicators are intended to be a guide for students and their families in preparing for a successful high school experience, which leads to readiness for college or a career.**

### **Well Prepared for High School Readiness**

- Earns a "B" level grade or higher in each grade level core subject: math, reading/language arts, science and social studies.
- Earns a "C" level grade or better in a minimum of one high school level course; e.g. Algebra I, Geometry, Coordinated Science, 9<sup>th</sup> grade English
- Exceeds standard (Level 4) on two or more assessments of the SBAC and meets standard (Level 3) on the remaining assessments
- Successfully completes the Washington State History requirement
- Regular, consistent and timely attendance is at least 98%

**Level 4**

### **Meets High School Readiness**

- Earns "C" level grade or better in each core subject: math, reading/ language arts, science and social studies
- Meets or exceeds standard for each subject on the state assessment—SBAC
- Successfully completes the Washington State History requirement
- Regular, consistent and timely attendance is at least 98%

**Level 3**

### **Approaching High School Readiness**

- Has earned one or more "D" level grades in each core subject: math, reading/ language arts, science and social studies
- Approaches standard in one or more subjects on the state assessment—SBAC
- Has yet to successfully complete the Washington State History requirement
- Consistent and timely attendance is between 94-98%

**Level 2**

### **Significantly At-Risk for High School Readiness**

- Has earned one or more "F" level grades in each core subject: math, English/language arts, science and history
- Does not meet standard in one or more subjects on the state assessment SBAC
- Has yet to successfully complete the Washington State History requirement
- Consistent and timely attendance is below 94%

**Level 1**

### **PARENT TIP**

- Register for LMS.
- Have frequent conversations with your student about the skills they are acquiring in each class. Help them create goals for the week, semester, and year and frequently review progress and roadblocks.
- Build in celebrations.

# Where to go when you need help



## Getting help with schoolwork

**Ask your TEACHER:** If you are struggling in a class GET HELP RIGHT AWAY!!! The longer you wait, the harder it is to catch up. Talk to your teacher as soon as you have problems. Find a moment when the teacher is not instructing the class to ask for extra help.

BE SPECIFIC! Make sure that you tell them as clearly as you can what you are struggling with. Tell them how to help you. Remember teachers are human (yes, it is true) and they cannot always read your mind.

Example: "Mr. Richards, can I get some help with fractions? I am confused about when to multiply and when to divide".

**Talk to your PARENTS:** Sit down with your parents and explain what you are having a hard time with in school. Make a plan with them to get help.

**Talk to your COUNSELOR:** Schedule a meeting with your grade level counselor. Make a plan to get the help that you need.

## Getting help with peers

**Friends** Often friendships change as people grow. If you are feeling left out or are having a problem with your friend, ask your friend if you two can get together and talk. It is hard to have a good conversation if you don't have time, or if other people are around. If you cannot solve a problem, ask your friend if they would be willing to set up an appointment with a counselor or peer mediator.

**Bully** If you are being intimidated, harassed, threatened or bullied, it is important that you use the 3 R's. Recognize, Refuse, Report.

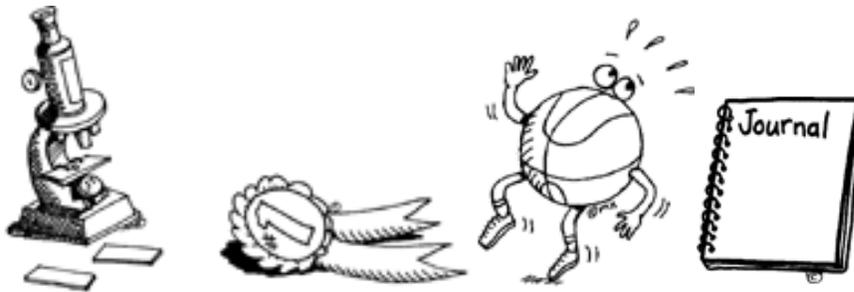
**Recognize** Identify the behavior as bullying. Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose.

**Refuse** Do not be a victim. Be assertive, look the person in the eye, stand up tall, and tell them to stop the behavior.

**Report** Talk to an adult. Explain Who, What, Where, and When the behavior is occurring. Make sure you talk to a trusted adult at school, such as your counselor, teacher, security officer, principal, or para educator if you are being bullied. We cannot help you, if we don't know about it!

**CONFIDENTIAL STUDENT SAFETY TIP LINE: 425-385-5050**

# Extra Activities...the way to go!



## **Associated Student Body (ASB)**

Most middle schools have an organization where students are elected to lead the student body. These elected students plan activities (like dances) and assemblies for the school. Check with your future middle school to find out what opportunities there are to run for a leadership office or volunteer as part of this group.

## **Sports**

You become eligible for sports when you are in seventh grade. Students in sixth grade are not allowed to compete in athletic events. However, all middle schools allow sixth graders to practice with the track, cross-country and wrestling teams.. Eligibility: As a sixth grader, it is important for you to maintain passing grades to make sure you are eligible to join a sport during your seventh grade year.

## **Clubs**

Many schools have clubs after school. Examples of clubs are: School Newspaper, Yearbook, Art Club, Math Club, Science Club, Diversity Club, Soccer Club, Drama etc... Check with your future middle school to see what they offer. Joining a club is a great way to meet new people and have fun by being involved at your school. At orientation, check to see what clubs your school offers.

## **Homework Club**

Many schools have a homework club or study time after school. This is a great way to get help from teachers, use school computers and resources, and work with students who are doing similar assignments as you.

## **Community Groups**

Many community organizations have after school clubs, sports and activities that are a fun way to stay active and meet other students.