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# West Point Middle School

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5<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Meeting

26 May 2009

# Agenda

- Middle school- an exciting time
- Why is 5<sup>th</sup> Grade in Middle School?
- The block schedule
- Core classes
- Exploratory classes
- Seminar
- DARE
- Lunch/recess
- Lockers
- Clubs and activities
- Parents- Partners in Success
- Questions

# Middle School- An Exciting Time

- **We are here to help make 5<sup>th</sup> grade a successful year for your child. Many people are working together to do this:**
  - **The Principal, Mr. Rudy**
  - **The Guidance Counselor**
  - **The 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Team of Teachers**
  - **Exploratory teachers**
  - **The front office staff**

# Why is 5<sup>th</sup> Grade in the Middle School?

- 5-8 configuration mirrors schools outside the gate (Highland Falls, Cornwall) and many NY middle schools.
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade is a transition year to middle school
  - 6 out of 8 classes spent with 3 core teachers
  - Electives similar to elementary specials
  - Provides access to Band, Drama, and other MS courses
- Most parents are anxious about it at first but happy with it by the end of the first quarter

# The Block Schedule

- Classes meet every-other day
- Periods 1-4 meet on the “gold” day
- Periods 5-8 meet on the “black” day
- We alternate gold/black/gold/black all school year- no class meets two days in a row
- Each class is 82 minutes long
- The 5<sup>th</sup> grade team teaches students how to get organized for this schedule.
- The PTO provides every student with an agenda book.

# Core Classes

- All 5<sup>th</sup> grade students take these classes:
  - Integrated Language Arts/Reading (two periods on schedule)
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Studies

# Exploratory Classes

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade students also take two periods of exploratory classes:
  - Drama, Research Project, Art, and Study Skills
  - Beginning Band
  - Physical Education and Health
- Every student will take 18 weeks of PE.
- Beginning Band students are not enrolled in two of four exploratory classes
- Beginning Chorus removed from offerings-affected students may change request to Band

# Seminar

- Every student has Seminar period 8
- It is when additional time and support is given
- It is also when school assemblies, concerts, and enrichment activities are scheduled
- 5<sup>th</sup> graders have one of their core teachers or the band teacher (Beginning Band students) for Seminar

# DARE

- Drug Awareness Resistance Education
- Taught by a trained officer from the West Point Provost Marshall's Office
- Ten lessons will be taught during Seminar period
- DARE Graduation after lessons

# Lunch / Recess

- Lunch and recess are each 20 minutes in length
- 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade lunches served back-to-back (one is at lunch while the other is at recess)
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade recess period- 12:04- 12:24
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade lunch period- 12:24- 12:44
- Snack time will occur during third block

# Lockers

- Every 5<sup>th</sup> grade student will be issued a locker
- Student must provide a combination lock- no key locks allowed
- Standard lock fits 5<sup>th</sup> grade lockers. All other sizes purchased at own risk!
- Students may only go to locker during times allowed by the teachers.
- Leave valuables at home.



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# Clubs and Activities

- 5th graders may participate in:
    - Student Council
    - Environmental Club
    - Homework Club
    - Intramural Sports
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# Parents- Partners in Success for Students

## ■ Be informed

- ❑ Get and use a Gradespeed parent account
- ❑ Read course descriptions on the school's web site
- ❑ Read the Bulldog Gazette- comes out every two weeks by email and on school web site
- ❑ Sign up for parent-teacher conferences
- ❑ Check the agenda book and ask to see completed assignments so you know topics of study
- ❑ Email teachers early with questions or concerns

## ■ Be Supportive

- **This is a big change for your child-** talk with them daily about it for at least the first two weeks of school
- **Provide a routine-** homework should be done at about the same time and place every evening
- **Help with organization-** require a weekly backpack clean-out and spot-check agenda book and completed assignments
- **Praise their progress-** don't just identify their shortfalls. Learning responsibility takes time and help. It will not occur just because a parent requires it!

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Questions?

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