

# **Keys to Success**



**For Middle School Students**

**2019-2020**

September 2019

Dear students and parents,

As a team, we are looking forward to an exceptional year! We have put together this informational packet regarding our middle school rules, policies, and expectations to help make the new school year as successful as possible. While we will discuss this information in class, it is still important that you thoroughly read through it again together, including the references made to the Deerfield School Student Handbook. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of us. It is best to resolve any questions early in the year to make sure everyone (teachers, students, and parents) clearly understands the policies.

Our goal for the middle school years is to prepare the students for a smooth transition to high school. With this in mind our vision is for each student to:

- Think creatively
- Identify and solve complex and meaningful problems
- Know their passions, strengths, and challenges
- Communicate and work well with others
- Lead healthy lives
- Be ethical, responsible, respectful, and caring citizens of a diverse world

*From Turning Points 2000- Educating Adolescents in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

We also strongly encourage both students and parents to frequently check Power School and each teacher's eBoard, as well as the Grade level websites for assignments, important dates to remember, and handouts. This is a great way to stay current, especially during an absence. Remember, however, that sometimes assignments and due dates change and the websites may not reflect these changes. For this reason, it is imperative that daily assignments be written in the student's agenda pad as they appear on the classroom homework board.

Again, please feel free to contact us with any questions and/or concerns you may have throughout the year. Let's have a wonderful year together!

Sincerely,

The Middle School Team

**TEACHER CONTACT LIST**  
**(908) 232-8828**

**Grade 8**

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## **Websites**

Our teacher websites are a great source of information and materials throughout the year. You will be able to find study information, handouts, and links to extra resources. We advise you to check the websites regularly, especially if you are absent.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL RULES

The rules explained below apply to and will be enforced in all middle school classrooms. Failure to do so will result in consequences as outlined in the Student Handbook.

## 1. Treat others with respect and courtesy at all times

- Always give your full attention to whoever is speaking, whether it is a teacher or a classmate.
- Make eye contact with the person speaking, so he/she knows you are paying attention.
- Be sensitive to others' feelings and do not tease or interrupt anyone.
- Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. Stand up to bullies and stick up for your classmates.
- Use appropriate language to help everyone feel safe and comfortable.
- Pack up only when given permission to do so. Remember, it is impolite to pack up when the teacher or a classmate is still speaking.

## 2. Always be punctual and prepared

- Be on time to class every day. If you are late, be sure to have a late pass.
- Come to class with ALL necessary materials, including supplies, your agenda pad, and assignments. This means NO locker visits during class. Visits to the locker are restricted to before homeroom, before lunch, after lunch, and at the end of the day.

## 3. Show respect for self and others

- Raise your hand.
- Wait to be recognized instead of calling out.
- Remain in the classroom unless you have permission to leave. You must have a hall pass.

## 4. Exhibit academic integrity in all of your work

- Take pride in your work. Always give 100%!
- Stay focused and on task using all of your class time productively.
- Hand in all assignments on time to avoid deductions.
- Cheating of any form, including plagiarism, will not be tolerated.
- Take responsibility for all of your work. If your printer does not work, come to school early and print out your assignment on a school printer. Please do not ask a teacher to print your work or ask to print during class.

## **5. Leave gum, cell phones (turned off), electronic devices (turned off) in your locker.**

- Turn off phones and electronic devices , and leave all of the above items in your locker to avoid temptation.

## **6. Be responsible about your missed work due to absences.**

- YOU are responsible for obtaining all missed work due to absences. Remember, it is NOT your teacher's job to chase you for missed work or make-ups!
- All missed work must be submitted in a timely fashion. As per the Deerfield Handbook, you have two school days for each day you were out.
- If you are absent on the day of a test or quiz or on the day a project is due, be prepared to take the test or turn in the project on the day you return.
- Do not expect to take a make-up test or quiz during class time because this will put you an additional day behind. See your teacher to make an appointment instead.
- If you miss class (TEP, music lesson, nurse's visit, doctor's appointment, etc.) but are in school the rest of the day, you must see the teacher of each missed class to turn in your homework before the end of the day. The same rule holds true if you miss class on the day of a test, quiz, or presentation.

# Rights and Responsibilities

## **Students can reasonably expect the following from their teachers:**

1. Students will be treated with respect and courtesy at all times.
2. Students will be treated fairly. Fairly doesn't always mean equally.
3. Students will be challenged to grow, both as learners and individuals.
4. Students may seek extra help from teachers when appropriate arrangements have been made.
5. Students may take advantage of their teachers' "open-door policies" to discuss both in and out of class issues, as long as the teacher has issued a pass for the meeting.
6. Students will receive fair notice of all announced quizzes and tests.

## **Teachers can expect the following from their students:**

1. Students will behave in a manner that contributes to a safe learning environment and which does not violate other students' right to learn.
2. Students will behave in a polite, cooperative manner toward students, teachers, and other school staff, including substitute teachers.
3. Students will use non-confrontational methods to resolve conflicts. (Peer mediators)
4. Students will refrain from obscene and defamatory communication in speech, writing, and other modes of expression in their interactions with the school community.
5. Students will express themselves in a manner that promotes cooperation and does not interfere with the educational process.
6. Students will be familiar with the school discipline code and abide by school rules and regulations.
7. Students will complete all work to the best of their abilities.
8. Students will show respect for school property and respect the property of others, both private and public.
9. Students will take responsibility for their actions and will accept consequences for inappropriate behavior.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL PROCEDURES

For all academic classes, the following policies and procedures are for your success in the classroom:

## CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Upon entering classroom:

- Students will immediately have the prior night's homework on their desks ready to be checked.
- Students will copy new homework in their agenda book.
- Students will begin "DO NOW" assignment when applicable.

During class:

- Students will strictly follow the behavioral guidelines in this packet as well as those in the school behavior code.
- Students are expected to actively participate in all activities and discussions.
- Students are expected to work cooperatively in groups.

## EXTRA HELP

Extra help is available from all teachers. Most students who do are glad they did. It is important to do this early and not wait until it is too late. We are here to help you and are happy to give you the chance to improve. You must take the first step.

## ASSIGNMENTS

- **Non-graded homework** must be presented at the beginning of class to receive credit. Homework that is not submitted at the beginning of class will earn a zero. Students **MAY NOT** go to their locker to retrieve assignments or books and will not receive homework credit for assignments presented after class.
- **Graded homework** assignments may be accepted for partial credit as determined by the teacher.
- **Large assignments/projects-** the policy for these will be explained, by the teacher, at the beginning of the project.
- If you miss a class (TEP, music lesson, nurse's visit, doctor's appointment, etc.) but are in school the rest of the day, it is your responsibility to submit your homework and receive any class work missed before the end of the day.
- If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get and complete any work missed (including class notes). District policy allows 2 days for each day absent to make up work. Students need to schedule missed tests and quizzes within this 2 day period. Missed tests and quizzes will result in a zero.
- The teacher websites are a useful resource for missed work.
- All writing/written assignments must be written in complete sentences. The use of email abbreviation is not acceptable.
- If you were unable to print your assignment at home, please save it to your chromebook and you may print it in your homeroom or before school with a pass from a teacher. You may not access your email accounts at school to print assignments. Please do not email them to your teacher for printing.



## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DUE DATES**

Due dates for assignments will not be affected because of a school closing. If a due date coincides with a closing, then the student is expected to turn in assignments upon return.

## **PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

Students are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Cheating results in zeros for those who copy AND those who allow their work to be copied. Plagiarism will result in zero and an immediate referral to the principal for disciplinary action.

Examples of cheating:

- Copying someone else's homework or report or allowing someone to copy your homework or report.
- In science class, sharing of data is acceptable, but sharing of lab reports is unacceptable.
- Using notes when not explicitly permitted by the teacher, while taking a test or quiz.
- Asking for or giving specific information about a test already taken by another student.
- Asking for or giving information to another student while taking a test or quiz.
- Copying information from the internet and not properly citing it.

Plagiarism is defined as "using another person's ideas, information, or expressions without (acknowledgement) [and] constitutes intellectual theft. Passing off another person's ideas, information, or expressions as your own...constitutes fraud." Modern Language Association

To avoid plagiarism:

- List the writers and viewpoints discovered in your research, and use the list to double check the material in your report before turning it in.
- Identify the sources of all exact wording, paraphrases, ideas, arguments and facts that you borrow.
- Ask your teacher if you are uncertain about your use of sources.

Source: Joseph Gibaldi. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Sixth Edition, Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

## **COMMUNICATIONS WITH HOME**

- Parents will be contacted in instances of sustained disruptive behavior and/or when a student's work does not reflect his/her ability or proper level preparation/organization.

## **POWERSCHOOL**

- Parents and students are responsible to review missed homework and grades on Powerschool.
- Parents are responsible for either setting up email notifications or checking the website on a consistent basis.
- Progress reports and marking period 1-3 report cards will not be sent home. Instead, parents will view averages and comments on Powerschool.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

**REMEMBER THAT GRADES ARE EARNED NOT GIVEN!**

- Your grade will be based on tests, quizzes, writing assignments, lab reports, class activities, projects, and homework.
- Each assignment has a point value.
- Your grade will be determined by the total number of points earned during the marking period divided by the number of points for the marking period.
- Final averages will not be rounded up when determining a letter grade.
- Extra credit will not be available to individual students.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

- All cell phones and electronic devices need to remain in the locker, turned off.
- Students carrying any of these items will be required to turn them into the office. After second offense, a parent will have to come to school to pick the item up.

## **SPORTS ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible to participate on a Deerfield School sports team a student must maintain a C- average in each class. If a student falls below this average, the student will have to sit out of practices and be benched for games until his/her average returns to a C-.

A student should request a conference with the teacher to develop a plan of action to ensure his/her return to the team before the end of the season. During this time, a student should allow 24 hours for a teacher to grade assignments, update the grade book, and notify the coach of the student's change in academic status.

## **FIELD TRIP ELIGIBILITY**

As per the Deerfield Handbook:

*As for conduct, students may be denied the privilege of attending a field trip if their behavior shows a negative pattern. Should sixth, seventh, or eighth grade students consistently engage in gross insubordination or other high level infractions, they will not be attending field trips and other grade level activities such as (but not limited to) the eighth grade Washington D.C. trip.*

## **REQUEST FOR WORK PRIOR TO A VACATION**

As per the Deerfield Handbook:

*The scheduling of vacations during the school year is not encouraged in that students miss valuable instructional time. Teachers will not be able to provide a list of specific assignments in advance but will make general assignments.*

Missed work must be made up and turned in within the time allotted by district policy (two days for each school day missed).

## **DRESS CODE**

As per the Deerfield Handbook:

*The purpose of the dress code is to develop an appropriate tone that contributes to a safe and positive learning environment with a minimal amount of distractions. We expect student apparel choices to be neat, clean, and modest throughout the school day.*

Highlights from the handbook:

- *Clothes are to fit properly. No excessively loose or tight articles of clothing are to be worn. Clothing should not be worn if it: exposes the midriff or does not meet the waistband or is too revealing (unreasonably low neckline)*
- *When wearing leggings a tunic or long loose shirt must cover to the upper thigh.*
- *Straps on tank tops need to be at a minimum three fingers width*
- *Skirts and shorts- need to be at a minimum fingertip length*
- *Undergarments must not be visible.*
- *Pants must be worn at the waist and must be securely fastened.*
- *Pants are not to have excessive or inappropriately placed holes.*
- *There is to be no writing on the back side of the pants.*
- *No hats or sunglasses are to be worn.*
- *Students will be required to change or cover the inappropriate clothing. Multiple dress code infractions will result in students being assigned detention.*

# Middle School Parent Contact Form

**\*\*Please fully complete all requested information below. Neatly PRINT, except where specified.\*\***

Student's full name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Mother/Guardian's Contact Information**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **Father/Guardian's Contact Information**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **When correspondence goes home, who should we e-mail?**

Mom

Dad

Both

**We have thoroughly reviewed the Middle School packet and Deerfield School Handbook together and understand our rights and responsibilities. If we have any questions about any policies, we will contact the appropriate teacher for clarification.**

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mother/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Father/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_