

HAWTHORN MIDDLE SCHOOL SOUTH

600 North Aspen Drive • Vernon Hills, Illinois 60061

Phone (847) 990-4100 • Fax (847) 816-9259

<http://mss.hawthorn73.org>

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Incoming 6th Grade Frequently Asked Questions

TRANSITION:

Who do I contact if I have a question about the transition to middle school?

If you have any questions regarding the Middle School transition, or any questions regarding other aspects of the beginning of the year, please contact our main office at (847) 990-4100. If the office staff cannot answer your question, they will direct your question to the right person.

Is there anything that I have to do before or during the transition to middle school?

There are several things that you are required to do prior to the start of the school year. Before your child can begin middle school, you must: register them, pay all required fees, provide proof of residency, and provide a State of Illinois physical exam with up to date immunizations on file. The physical exam is good for one year from the date the doctor completes the exam. Therefore, if your child participates in sports, he/she will need a physical for each school year. If your child has his/her State of Illinois physical exam completed by the doctor, ensure he checks 'Interscholastic Sports' on the back of the physical form. This will be sufficient for your child to participate in sports during the school year. In addition to registration requirements, it is best to purchase all student supplies, a gym uniform and lock prior to the start of school.

What can I do for my child before the school year starts that would help make the transition for him/her easier?

Our 6th grade staff is extremely conscientious of students' needs and concerns. The staff works with students to problem-solve any issues and answer any of their questions. In addition, we have several events at the start of the school year to help students feel comfortable on the first day of school. For example, in May all 5th graders will visit the Middle Schools during their school day. There is also a 6th Grade Orientation that takes place the day before school starts where the students meet their homeroom teacher, get a tour of the building, and see the activities, clubs, and sports. All middle school students may participate in "Walk Your Schedule" where students and parents can walk through the student's daily schedule and meet some staff members.

GENERAL:

What are the school hours?

Full Day: 7:40 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.

Early Release Day: 7:40 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.

The building doors open at 7:00 a.m., and the office is open from 7:00 - 3:30 p.m. on school days. For a Full Day of school the day starts at 7:40 a.m. with a 2:10 p.m. dismissal. For an Early Release Day of school the day starts at 7:40 a.m. with an 11:10 a.m. dismissal. Students are considered tardy if they arrive to homeroom or to the building after 7:40 a.m. It is generally a good idea for students to arrive to school by 7:30 a.m. This will allow students enough time to visit their lockers before going to homeroom.

After school activities can run from 2:10 - 4:30 p.m. Most clubs run until 3:00 pm. The club sponsor or sports coach will provide information on exact times.

Once the school year begins, who do I contact about my child's well-being?

If you have concerns about your child at school, it is best to contact one of their academic teachers. Depending on what your concern is, they can either work with you to solve the problem or aide you in contacting the building social workers or administrators.

Contact information for building social workers:

April Foley: (847) 990-4135

John Langelund: (847) 990-4144

Lauren Liebach: (847) 990-4145

If you ever have a medical concern, please contact our school nurse, Lora Jacobs, at (847) 990-4118.

How does drop off and pick up work at Middle South?

- Drop off for students is from 7:15 - 7:30 a.m. on the north side of the building.*
- Pick up is from 2:10 - 2:30 p.m. on the north side of the building.*
- Students can be picked up in front of the building after 2:30 p.m. when the busses have cleared the lot.*
- No cars are allowed to enter the front semi-circle in the morning from 7:00 - 7:45 a.m. or in the afternoon from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.*

What if my child struggles with their locker or getting to classes on time?

We know that one of the biggest concerns that new 6th graders have is opening their lockers. Our 6th grade staff is aware of this concern and will work with students to ensure that they learn how to open their locker. The 6th grade staff is very understanding and will excuse late students for the first few weeks to allow them time to become efficient with their lockers, learn their way around the building, and figure out when to stop at their lockers. We encourage students to talk with an adult and seek help when they are having trouble getting to class on time.

What does Middle South provide in terms of breakfast and lunch options?

Hawthorn District 73 provides both breakfast and lunch through our food service provider, Arbor Food Service. Students are offered a variety of hot and cold entrees each day. Monthly breakfast and lunch menus can be found on the Middle School South website under lunch menu or at <http://www.hawthorn73.org/hawthorn-information/food-service/>

- *A full breakfast is offered daily from 7:15 a.m. - 7:30 a.m.*
- *The main lunch line offers different hot meals each day as indicated. In addition to these meals, available daily is; pizza, cheeseburgers, crispy or buffalo chicken sandwiches, salads, and assorted sandwiches and/or wraps. Our food service also offers a la cart items (for an additional charge) such as assorted baked chips, cookies, granola bars, bottles of water and juice.*

Is there a place my child can go to work or study after school?

There are several options for places where students can go to work or study after school. The first is our building Resource Center (library.) The Resource Center is open for students from 2:10 - 3:30 p.m. Monday - Thursday and 2:10 - 3:00 p.m. on Friday. In addition to this, your student may be able to stay after school with his or her teachers, but this should be prearranged with the teacher prior to the student staying. We are also very lucky to have the Aspen Library within walking distance from our school. A lot of our students walk over to the Aspen Library to work on homework. There are high school students who are in the library to tutor students; contact the Aspen Library for more information.

Where do we purchase gym uniforms and locks?

The Hawthorn Middle Schools are working with Sports 11, to supply the required P.E. uniforms and P.E. locks for student purchase. Sixth grade students will need to visit Sports 11 to purchase the required items.

Sports 11: 838 S. Milwaukee Avenue, Libertyville / Phone Number: (847) 680-1511
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How do parents know about upcoming events at Middle South?

Parents/Guardians can always find upcoming events on the Middle School South website. You can also sign-up for our Friday Newsletter email notifications and our Remind communication system. Sign-up links can be found on the Middle School South website.

What should I do if my child is absent?

*Please call the Attendance Line at (847) 990-4119, each day **before 9:00 a.m.** to report a late arrival, out for illness or family emergency. Include your child's name, homeroom teacher, and reason for the absence including any specific symptoms. On the second day of your child's absence a homework request may be made. Homework requests need to be mentioned while reporting your child's absence. Five consecutive days of absence requires a doctor's note.*

What do I do if my child has to miss school for an extended period of time for a family reason?

Any extended absence should be reported to the office one week prior to the student's absence. If the extended absent is for two or more days, students are required to complete a pre-arranged absence form and submit the completed form at least one day prior to their absence. This will allow students to touch base with their teachers and receive work that they will miss. Students absent for more than 10 academic days will be unenrolled from Hawthorn District 73. Upon return, the parent/legal guardian and student must report to the District Office to complete the in-person re-registration process, and prove residency. The only exception is when the absence is medically documented. Student placement will be based on space availability and residency.

What access does my child have to technology during the school day?

All students will have their own Chromebook for the 2017-2018 school year. We are currently working out the details on how best to provide information regarding distribution and other important information regarding the utilization of this technology. Please stay tune for details to be shared at a later date.

What is the District policy for use of Cell Phones/Electronics during the school day?

Cellular telephones and other communication devices must be turned off during the school day, unless requested by an educator for instructional purposes. Unauthorized use during the school day is not permitted. Use of personal devices during the school day, or unauthorized/inappropriate use of any electronics (cell phones, cameras, laptops, etc.) at any time (including off-school time) is unacceptable. Schools may develop other rules, for instance, requiring that cell phones be stored in a locker and not on a person. In addition, emergency procedures may require the powering down of all wireless communication devices (including laptops, cell phones, walkie-talkies, etc.), as directed by law enforcement. Failure to comply may result in the cell phone/device being confiscated as well as disciplinary measures consistent with the Behavior Code. Parents/guardians may be required to come to the school to retrieve the device, especially if the device is suspected of containing inappropriate content. Additionally, devices may be turned over to local authorities if suspected of containing inappropriate content. If the violation involves the use of school property, the student may also be restricted from using school technology.

ACADEMICS:

What courses do all 6th Graders take?

- *Students seated in homeroom at 7:40 a.m. (Full Day and Early Release Day)*
- *10 minute homeroom*
- *200 minutes of core academics*
 - ★ *50 minutes each for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies*
- *40 minutes for Writing Workshop*
 - ★ *Please note, students from The School of Dual Language will take Advanced Spanish in place of Writing Workshop*
- *40 minutes for Physical Education*
- *40 minutes for Arts/Technology*
 - ★ *5 rotations (each 7 weeks in length) – Art, Consumer Technology, Health, Industrial Technology, and Music*
- *20 minutes for lunch*
- *40 minutes for Band/Orchestra/Chorus or Integrated Math & Science (IMS)*
- *Dismissal is 2:10 p.m. for a Full Day and 11:10 a.m. for an Early Release Day*

What is an Encore class?

The following options are encore classes:

- *Band (if your student has prior experience)*
- *Orchestra (if your student has prior experience)*
- *Chorus (no prior experience required)*
- *Integrated Math and Science (IMS)*

What is Integrated Math and Science (IMS)?

IMS is a class where students have an opportunity to enrich their learning of concepts in both mathematics and science through a series of activities and experiments. In addition to this enrichment, IMS sets out to provide correctives through our Response to Intervention (RtI) program. Furthermore, IMS helps students to develop good study habits.

How is my student placed in their classes?

Assessment data and teacher input on a student's performance is reviewed when determining placement into either regular or advanced Mathematics and English language arts. Some data reviewed for this process includes; MAP assessments, State achievement tests, learner characteristics, and district common assessments (please refer to "Placement" document on gray.)

What do I do if I am concerned with my student's 5th to 6th grade placement?

The Hawthorn staff works hard to ensure that every student is getting the most out of their education. In early June you will receive a 6th grade course confirmation letter. Please review and call the Middle School South office at (847) 990-4100 if you notice any errors or if you feel that your student is not placed correctly.

Who do I contact if I have problems with PowerSchool?

If you are having problems with the PowerSchool program, contact the Middle School South office. If they cannot answer your question, they will be able to direct you to a person that can.

How do I stay in touch with my child's academic progress?

At the middle school level, one of the best ways to stay in touch with your child's progress is to frequently check PowerSchool. All teachers update this information at least every two weeks, so the information will be up-to-date. In addition to this, if you have a question or would like to know more than just the grade, you can always email your child's teacher for information. Furthermore, many of our staff have blogs linked to the Middle School South website with daily academic and informational updates.

How will I know who my child's teachers are at Middle South?

*In early August a District-Wide Residency event will be held where all District 73 families must prove residency each school year. This one stop event enables the parent/guardian to prove residency for the whole family, pick up student schedules with teachers' names, scheduled classes, and locker information, pay fees, drop off health forms, and find out bus routes and stops. Student information will **not** be mailed home prior to the school year.*

What happens if my child does not complete their homework when it's due?

Barring extenuating circumstances, late work may be penalized in order to encourage responsibility. The staff at Middle School South is very understanding when there are extenuating circumstances, and you can notify teachers should the situation arise. Students who continually do not complete their work may receive consequences at school, and the teachers will be in touch with you to determine the best course of action to get your child on track, if necessary.

What is Advisory?

Advisory is a program in homeroom where students develop their social and emotional skills. A major goal for Middle School South's Advisory program is for staff and students to build relationships in order to improve two-way communication to address a wide-range of situations, topics, concerns and issues facing middle school students. Furthermore, the Advisory program is geared to help students develop tolerance and respect for one another, recognize personal strengths, and recognize that everyone has strengths even though they may be different from one another.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR:

What extracurricular opportunities are there for 6th graders?

There are a lot of different opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities. There are sports in each season (fall, early winter, late winter, and spring). Outside of sports, there are a large number of after-school clubs in which students can participate. A full list of sports and activities can be found on the Middle School South website. Please note participation in sports is dependent on attendance and academic eligibility.

How do I sign my child up for these activities?

During the 6th grade orientation, students are given an opportunity to learn more about the different sports and clubs. If they are interested, they should watch the morning news for information about when tryouts are or when the club meets. Most clubs and sports only require the student to show up to the first meeting. These dates are posted on the school website under the activities section. If a student would like more information, please have them ask his or her homeroom teacher.

Where can I find information on extracurricular opportunities?

All information about the different extracurricular opportunities can be found on the Middle School South website under the activities section and posted throughout the school.

How do I sign my child up for the seasonal after school Activity Bus?

*Middle Schools North and South provide a seasonal after school Activity Bus for students that participate in an athletic or club activity or prearranged academic help. The first fifty students to sign up, per building, will be given the privilege to ride the Activity Bus during the active season. Students will be required to sign up **seasonally**. If a student is not eligible for regular school year transportation or the family has waived transportation, that student is **not eligible** to participate in the Activity Bus. The Activity Bus will be routed to general locations and not to student home addresses or current school bus stops.*