Newport News Public Schools (NNPS) has eight middle schools which serve students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade. To provide a gradual transition from elementary school, NNPS middle schools operate on a team-within-a-school approach for a smaller, more individualized learning environment that consists of a team of core teachers who work together to teach a set group of students. Additionally, the school is divided into sections by grade level and each grade has its own schedule and staff support team.

Students transitioning to middle school will have several opportunities to visit their school, learn their way around the building, understand their schedule and get to know the staff and students.

The NNPS middle school experience is designed to build and encourage positive relationships that will provide each student with the tools he/she needs to become college, career and citizen-ready.
Middle-school students receive instruction in the four core areas of English, mathematics, science and history/social science, as well as technology, fine arts, living skills, industrial arts, world language, health and physical education.

The Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools describe the state’s expectations for student learning and achievement. The standards outline what educators should teach and what students should learn at each grade level. All Newport News middle schools teach students these standards.

NNPS also provides a program of study that builds the skills, knowledge and expertise students need to ensure future success. The school district’s college, career and citizen-ready skills are incorporated in each subject. These skills are developed around three themes: information and communication skills, learning and thinking skills, and life and career skills.

Middle-school students who enroll in and successfully complete high-school credit classes such as world language and higher-level math classes (algebra, geometry) will receive credit that may be counted towards state graduation requirements. The class grades become part of the student’s high school transcript and are included in the student’s grade point average.

Report cards are issued every nine weeks and are supplemented by interim reports at the mid-point of each marking period. Students are evaluated at the end of each marking period on achievement, work-study habits and behavior.

Homework is an important part of the middle-school educational experience. It strengthens skills, increases learning time, promotes responsibility and independence, and develops good work and study habits. Middle-school students should expect an average of two hours of homework per night. Students are encouraged to maintain a homework notebook to stay organized.

Students will begin each day in their homeroom class. Then they will change classrooms throughout the day on an alternating class schedule. While each middle school has a slight variation of the A/B block schedule, here is a sample schedule for a sixth grade student at Gildersleeve Middle School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8:15 - 8:20 a.m.</th>
<th>8:25 - 9:57 a.m. (PE/RA Block)</th>
<th>10 - 11:30 a.m. (Block 1 - Core)</th>
<th>11:35 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.</th>
<th>12:05 - 1:30 p.m. (Block 2 - Core)</th>
<th>1:30 - 2:50 p.m. (Block 3 - Core)</th>
<th>2:55 - 3 p.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A” Day Home Room</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>6 Math</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>6 English</td>
<td>6 Social Studies (1st Semester)</td>
<td>Home Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B” Day Home Room</td>
<td>Related Arts</td>
<td>Related Arts</td>
<td>6 Math</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>6 English</td>
<td>6 Social Studies (1st Semester)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students say that one of their favorite things about middle school is the variety of related arts classes that are available to them. In addition to physical education, students may take technology classes, art, drama, band, orchestra, chorus, world language, computer applications and living skills. Additional class options specific to each middle school are also offered.

Dive into new experiences.
-Will

Learn to study. ~ Hailey

Middle School Schedule

Related Arts

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Middle School Schedule
**Athletics**

All middle-school students have an opportunity to participate in middle school athletics. Students may try out to join the track team, volleyball team or the basketball team. The Middle School Athletics Program is designed to promote sportsmanship, teamwork, motivation and self-discipline.

NNPS middle-school teams compete against each other during the regular season and advance to quarter-final, semi-final, and citywide championship games. Track teams compete in the fall. Volleyball teams compete during the winter and basketball teams compete in the spring. Practice is held during the season after school. Transportation and uniforms are provided for all middle-school athletes.

Family members are encouraged to attend the meets and games to support the athletes.

**Get to know the layout of your school.**
- Miranda

**For Rising 6th Graders...**

These books, suggested by middle school counselors, librarians and students, can help rising sixth grade students prepare for the transition to middle school.

- “The Strange Case of Origami Yoda,” by James Angleberger
- “Shakespeare’s Secret,” by Elise Broach
- “If a Tree Falls at Lunch Period,” by Gennifer Choldenko
- “Lunch Money,” by Andrew Clements
- “How to Survive Middle School,” by Donna Gephart
- “The Misfits,” by James Howe
- “Schooled,” by Gordon Korman
- “The Bully,” by Paul Langan
- “Wonder,” by R. J. Palacio
- “I Funny,” by James Patterson
- “Bystander,” by James Preller

**Clubs and Other School Activities**

Recognizing the social nature of middle school students and capitalizing on their need to move and do, Newport News middle schools offer a variety of enrichment activities that expose students to higher level thinking, real world application, and fun. Students may participate in student government, chess clubs, robotics, journalism, photography, debate, Odyssey of the Mind, yoga, e-gaming, sign language, and more.

While a school staff person serves as the club or activity sponsor, students are encouraged to become actively involved in establishing agendas and goals, recruiting and organizing its activities. Every club and activity offers students numerous opportunities to develop and hone their leadership skills, and explore and develop new talents to highlight their strengths.

Most clubs and activities are held after school, two days a week. To ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate, bus transportation is provided for all activities.

**You are not alone.**

“On the first day of classes, everyone (is) as nervous as you (are).” - Tessa

**Tdap Shots**

All students in sixth to 12th grade must have received a Tdap shot in order to attend school in NNPS. Sixth graders must have a documented Tdap shot to start school.
**Middle School Tips**

*Establish a routine* — but be flexible. Most middle schools start earlier than elementary schools (some begin at 7:20 a.m.), so get into the habit of going to bed early enough to get the recommended eight to 10 hours of sleep. Think of sleep time as cumulative over the course of the week; if you have to stay up late studying or competing/performing, try to make up the difference the next night.

*Stay in-the-know.* Check the school’s website and teachers’ websites to stay current on events and assignments. Parents can visit the school to obtain a log-in and password for access to the parent portal, which includes information about students’ grades and attendance (parent must bring photo ID).

*Choose friends wisely.* Learn to recognize so-called friends who don’t have your best interests in mind. Maintain close relationships with those who are goal-oriented, positive, trustworthy and fun! You don’t have to like everyone, but you do have to RESPECT everyone.

*Be organized.* Have a system for maintaining papers, notes, homework, classwork and supplies. Use a planner or agenda book consistently to record homework assignments.

*Get involved.* Join a club, play a sport, volunteer in the community, attend school-sponsored events. Extracurricular involvement is a great way to make friends and develop time-management skills. But, avoid becoming over-committed! It’s better to devote your time and energy to a couple of activities than to spread yourself too thinly. Parents can join the PTA in order to stay active in the school!

*Use social media responsibly.* Parents should monitor students’ on-line activity and not permit access to sites like Facebook (the age requirement when registering for an account is 13), as these public forums are often misused and can be dangerous for students who are not developmentally mature enough to handle the responsibility of a social networking account.

*Dress appropriately.* Follow your middle school’s dress code.

*Practice good locker habits.* You will only get a couple of visits to your locker each day, so get everything you need while you’re there. Don’t linger at your locker because other students need to get to their lockers, too. Memorize your combination so you can be more efficient at locker time. Remember: Turn the dial right, then left, then right.

*Utilize your resources.* Every school is equipped with a team of professionals to assist you with concerns or questions you have. Also, take advantage of after-school tutoring sessions with teachers when needed.

*Keep a positive attitude.* Support your teachers, take responsibility for yourself and find opportunity in every experience.

- provided by Katie Morgan, Dozier Middle School

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**Middle School Experience**

**Hours of Operation**

**Dozier Middle & Passage Middle**
7:20 a.m. - 2:05 p.m.
Half - Dismissal: 10:50 a.m.
Early Dismissal: 12:35 p.m.

**Crittenden Middle, Gildersleeve Middle, Hines Middle & Huntington Middle**
8:15 a.m. - 2:55 p.m.
Half - Dismissal: 11:35 a.m.
Early Dismissal: 1:25 p.m.

**B. T. Washington**
9:05 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
Half - Dismissal: 12:15 p.m.
Early Dismissal: 2:15 p.m.

**An Achievable Dream Middle**
8:05 a.m. - 4:20 p.m.
Wednesday: 12:50 p.m.
Half - Dismissal: 11:15 a.m.
Early Dismissal: 1:10 p.m.

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**Still Curious?**

Still have questions? Need more information?
- Visit us on-line at nnschools.org
- Talk to your school counselor.
- Visit your middle school.