

7th Grade Welcome & Information from Dean | James Aitken

Dear Families,

I hope you are all enjoying the last week of summer, and that there is some excitement about returning to school shortly. We are about 6 days away from the start of school! That's hard to believe, and I imagine emotions are all over the map. I am super excited to welcome you all next week and I can tell you all that the 7th grade teachers and I are doing all we can to make sure that ALL students, new and returning, feel known, welcome, safe and part of the community. We are also doing all we can to make the start of school fun and engaging!

I know you have heard from Jonathan Davis, our principal, but I thought I would reiterate a few things and give you a few 7th grade specific details as we head into the long weekend.

1. **Student Orientation:** Just as a reminder, our first day of school is Tuesday, September 5th. We will be doing orientation activities for students all day on Tuesday. Please arrive at school by 8:00am if you can.
2. **Where To Go On Day One:** We will go over the full schedule for the day when students arrive, but to begin the day, Returning Students please go straight to the **BIG GYM** and find your advisor (look for the signs). New Students, you will be directed to the **GYM LOBBY** where you will meet with Mr. Aitken and your buddies. If you are a returning student buddy, please refer to Mr. Samedy's email for

specific instructions.

3. **What to Bring:** a comfy backpack with your pencil case and pencils, iPad in it, an umbrella or jacket in case of weather, sweatshirt if you get cold easily (MS building is pretty cool), your campus map, a reusable water bottle with a straw. I recommend wearing comfortable clothing on the first few days.

Note: You can bring a cell phone as long as it is turned entirely off and kept in your backpack during school hours: 8:10am-3:25pm. Remember: Apple and other smart watches and ear buds like air pods are not to be worn during the school day – just like cell phones, they should be in the backpacks or at home.

4. **New Students:** We have 28 new students joining the 7th grade this year! First of all, a warm welcome to all of you and your families. We are so glad you are with us! I will be spending some time with just the new students during orientation week and beyond.
5. **Returning Student Buddies:** If your child is a buddy, be sure they connect with their new student again this coming week/weekend and remind them to welcome them and be model buddy on Tuesday.
6. **Advisory:** On August 31st, Advisory groups are assigned. Look for an email on Thursday evening to your child from your child's new advisor. (Advisory groups are not the same as class groups. Students will learn about class groupings for math, english, history and science at student orientation when they receive their schedules from their advisors.)
7. **Sports and Activities:** Sports will begin on Monday,

September 18th. We will have a ton more information coming to students about sports and activities, including a dedicated advisory period, so that kids can learn about various options and sign up for sports.

8. **Links/Resources:** In case you haven't been to this site already, I highly recommend it. It has almost everything you would need to know regarding the start of school. Many questions can be answered with the info on this page.

<https://startofschool.d-e.org/middle-school-start-of-school-page/>

9. **School Calendar:** Looking ahead, you may want to note vacation days and other closure dates on the school calendar:

https://d-e.myschoolapp.com/ftpimages/434/download/download_8834976.pdf

10. **Communication:** If you need to contact someone mid-day and get a message to your child or you need a same-day response to a question, please reach out to the middle school office manager, **Ms. Cebulski, at 201-227-3230**, or if it attendance related, our MS attendance Coordinator, **Ms. Jones, at 201-227-3301**.
11. **Pick Up/Drop Off:** Drop off and pickup is in front of **Umpleby Hall**. Please plan on 7:55am or 8:00am drop off. The School day ends at 3:25pm and pickup begins then in the same location. (Please be patient. It will take time, but pick-up lines will get better once MS after-school sports start **on September 18th**.) Please do not pick up from the streets around campus as this creates dangerous situations both for them and for traffic in general.

12. **Parent Orientation:** Parent Orientation will be on campus on **Tuesday, September 12th @ 7:00pm**. This night is geared primarily towards new parents. More information and an invitation to follow.
13. **Back to School Night:** Back to school night will occur on campus on the evening of **Thursday, September 21st @ 6:30pm**. is a program presented by the middle school teachers geared mainly towards giving you insight into the day to day in the classrooms and our curriculum. More information and an invitation to follow.
14. **Overnight Trip:** Remember that the 7th grade overnight trip is a two day one night trip to YMCA Camp Speers in Dingmans Ferry, PA. The dates are **September 28th – 29th**, with pickup on the 29th at normal time, roughly 3:25pm. More info to follow.
15. **Summer Reading and Math –** All students have summer assignments that should be completed this week! It is not necessary to bring summer reading books to school on orientation day, but it is a good idea to have the work out of the way.
16. **General Info:** Before the first day, I recommend completing three tasks, if you have not already: order your child's books (but do not have them bring these to school yet); finish loading all the required health forms into Magnus; and help your child set up their home study station, with access to a plug for the ipad, a printer, and whatever features you and your child agree make for the best work environment for them.

That's it for now! A lot of info I know, but I'm doing my best to make things as smooth and easy for students and parents alike

as we get ready to begin next week. I am S0000 excited to see all of you soon. I will check in next week again.

—

James Aitken

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