

“What To Expect in Middle School”

An insight into the academic, social, and developmental life of a Wilson student.



“Mr. Osborne, may I be excused? My brain is full.”

Academics/Scheduling

- Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies
- Electives
 - Art
 - Band
 - Orchestra
 - Beginning Spanish/Spanish 1
 - Yearbook
 - Agriculture
 - Creative Writing
- Intensive Reading (based on FSA Scores)
- Gifted services offered through Math, Science and/or HS courses.
- HS Courses: Spanish 1, DIT, Physical Science, Algebra, Geometry & Agriculture (8th)
Grades in these courses count towards HS GPA!



Electives

Students are scheduled into electives based on their elective choices. However, students *do not* automatically get their top two choices. Making elective changes in a schedule is not a priority - making sure a student is in the correct academic courses is the top priority. Often making an elective change will change an entire student's schedule, which can disrupt their routine as well as the routine of the class.

Students will receive course elective selection sheets towards the end of 1st semester. *Please discuss with your child the importance of choosing wisely.*

How Do District Test Scores Affect My Child's Schedule?

- All students take Reading in 6th grade
- Students who score a level 1 in reading will be scheduled into a year-long Intensive Reading class (*reading is otherwise not required in 7/8th grade*).
- An intensive reading class will take the place of an elective in the student's schedule.
- A 7th/8th grade student's schedule will include 4 core courses, 2 electives and PE.

How Can Assessments Affect Future Scheduling/Plans?

- For magnet applications for high schools, the magnet office looks at 6th and 7th grade FSA scores and takes the higher of the two in each subject (math and reading).
- 7th Grade Math FSA scores (TBD) are used for Algebra placement in 8th grade. Students scoring a 3 and higher are placed into Algebra. Students must have successfully completed Algebra and the Algebra EOC exam to enroll in magnet programs (Robinson IB, Collegiate Academy, Middleton STEM).



PE Waiver & Florida Virtual School

If your child participates in an organized sport or athletic activity for more than 250 minutes per week, they may waive out of PE and take another elective in its place, upon availability.

A student **must** always be enrolled in a total of 7 classes.

Please contact Mrs. Mirasola or Ms. Sobo with any questions regarding Hillsborough Virtual School and your child's schedule for next year.

What's going on in Middle School?

- Changes in friends
- Greater need for independence (*they might not want you around but they still **need** you around*).
- Academics can take a back seat to social life.
- Continued challenges with motivation and organization.



How you can help your child...

- Continue to encourage him to advocate for himself.
- Monitor her social media often. You own the phone!
- Many students make new friends in middle school. Get to know who their friends are.
- Be patient – the transition from 6th to 8th grade typically brings a more mature student.

How you can seek support...

- Talk to other parents.
- Talk to a student services team member if you feel your child is struggling beyond what is expected.
- *We are all in this together!*



Middle School: 'The Tunnel'

- Think of middle school as a three-year maturation process.
- Give your child choice and responsibility. Examples of when this can be used: disagreement with friends, disagreement with teacher, not earning the grade they wanted.
- When your child presents a problem to you, try to remain as calm as you can (easier said than done). Ask them what they think they should do about it. Offer your viewpoint in the least judgmental way possible. Do not be offended or upset if they don't try what you suggested and try it their way, and then are not successful. This is how they learn!
- **You can try to fix everything for them, but they will not learn how to fix things themselves. Resist the urge (it will be strong) to step in and solve their problems for them.**
- Technology often hinders our students' interpersonal skills (and I guess ours too sometimes, right?). It is more important now to encourage your child to try to talk to whomever they are having a problem with. That includes their teachers. You can help them figure out what to say (but don't tell them what to say).
- You will be amazed at who they become by the time they leave here! If parents were to keep a journal about their 6th grader and then read it when the child left 8th grade, they would be in awe of how much they have grown. They would also have some serious laughs.

Prepare the Child For the Road, Not the Road For the Child - Kari Kampakis

<http://www.karikampakis.com/2015/07/prepare-the-child-for-the-road-not-the-road-for-the-child/>

Questions?