



Middle School News, September 2022

Dear Families,

We are excited to be back in the classroom with our students. Your child is supported by our middle team, which connects regularly about student concerns and successes.

While your child has many teachers throughout the day, your child's advisory teacher will be your main point of contact. The advisory teachers are listed below:

6th grade: Mrs. Cina - acina@bacards.org and Ms. Collier - ccollier@bacards.org

7th grade: Mrs. Battles lbattles@bacards.org and

8th grade: Mrs. Smisek - jsmisek@bacards.org and Fr. Powers jpowers@bacards.org / Mr. Lorence blorence@bacards.org

The advisory teacher helps to guide students in study habits and monitor progress in all of their classes. These teachers are your main point of contact when you need to share something with all of your child's teachers (i.e. my child had a rough morning) and can pass the information to the rest of your child's teachers.

Please continue to contact the office regarding attendance information via phone or attendance@bacards.org.

Look for a middle school newsletter each quarter. Please feel free to call or email us if you have any further questions regarding middle school.

Thank you for partnering with us at BA,
Middle School Teachers

Middle School Faculty

Mrs. Nettie Battles-7th and 8th grade math, 8th grade English, 7th grade advisor

Mr. Michael Bengen-physical education

Ms. Cicha -choir, 6th grade religion, 7th grade advisor

Mrs. Angela Cina-MS 6th grade math and English, 7th grade English, 6th grade advisor

Ms. Caryn Collier-MS social studies, 6th grade advisor

Mr. David Gilmore - Geometry

Mr. Jason Hillesheim-MS art and 6th grade technology

Mr. Maxwell Johnson - MS ag/industrial tech

Mrs. Kris Kohl-MS resource teacher

Mr. Lorence-band, 6th grade religion, 8th grade advisor

Fr. John Powers-6th, 7th, and 8th grade religion, 8th grade advisor

Mrs. Julie Smisek-MS science, 8th grade advisor

Mrs. Melinda Reeder-president/principal

Mr. Uphus-guidance counselor

Mr. John Wollersheim-assistant principal

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 21 - MS information night for new families
6:30 pm to 7 pm
- Oct. 7-Homecoming
- Oct. 15 -Spooktakular 5K run



Technology

Schoology

Bethlehem Academy uses Schoology/PowerSchool to track attendance and grades and post online assignments. Each class has a Schoology web page where students view daily assignments, missing work, grades, and class resources. Encourage your child to show you his or her grades on Schoology on a regular basis. Sixth graders will receive training on Schoology in technology class.

Leaving Laptops at School Over the Weekend

Please see the article on the right about study tips and ways to manage laptops at home. Laptops are very exciting for middle school students to have! The laptop is a privilege that comes with responsibility. Teachers have found that students are motivated by having access to their laptops. For this reason, students may need to leave their laptops at school over the weekend if their grades are low.

Each Wednesday or Thursday during study hall, advisory teachers meet with students to complete a grade check to help them stay accountable and up-to-date on their work. If students have a D- or lower in a class, they will be asked to leave their laptops over the weekend. The grade check is completed on Wednesday or Thursday, so students have until Friday to work on improving their grades. If students need to leave their laptops at school, the students are responsible for printing any hard copies of assignments to complete over the weekend.

Teachers can make exceptions to this process. Some exceptions may include students requesting to keep a laptop because an assignment requires a laptop or students who have had extended absences.

Study Tips for Middle School Students

Middle school students create and develop essential study skills that carry through to high school. Below are some tips for you to set your child up for success:

- Set a routine and find a consistent place and time for completing homework.
- Ask your child to show his or her grades to you on Schoology. All students will soon know how to log in and show you their progress. In addition, Schoology is the resource for your child to find daily lessons, homework, and look ahead for tests/quizzes. If your child is absent, Schoology is the tool to access the classwork/homework your child has missed.
- Check for missing work. Many times grades are low because a student is missing work. Encourage your child to check Schoology for missing work.
- Each class has many ways to study. To study, your child can use Quizlet, flashcards, study guides, reviews, or even teach you what they are learning! For additional support, your child can meet with his or her teacher and/or school counselor.
- Set boundaries for technology. Teens love technology for learning, socializing, and entertainment. Create clear rules about when and where your child can use his or her school laptop. If the school laptop is too much of a distraction at home, you can set up a plan to store your child's laptop in your bedroom or a safe place where he or she can not access it during the night. You can also contact your child's teachers/counselor to discuss keeping the laptop at school.
- Connect with your child's teacher if you have concerns, questions, or celebrations.
- Keep devices out of your child's bedroom at night. The middle school staff has seen an increase in students who cannot stay awake in class. Create an environment where your child cannot access technology during sleeping hours.
- Allow your child to make mistakes. Middle school is a good time to allow your child to work on independence and responsibility. See how your child does with more freedom with schoolwork. If he or she fails at something, have a discussion about the lesson learned from the experience. Middle school is a great time to make mistakes and learn from them!



Religion

Students have religion class each day as well as school Mass weekly. Classes take turns hosting and planning Masses throughout the year. Classes also have opportunities to visit the chapel for Adoration throughout the year.

Service Hours

One of the requirements for religion class is that each student completes at least four hours of service per semester. Most service hours take place outside the school day. For example, a student could earn service hours by raking a neighbor's yard, helping an elderly friend or younger children, or volunteering at St. Vincent de Paul. Any students unsure if an opportunity of service would count toward service hours should speak with their religion teacher. Typical household chores would not count toward hours.

CARDS

CARDS stands for character, accountability, respect, decision-making, and service. Ask your child how they have been using these character traits to build up a positive, respectful learning environment.

Academic Support

Teachers are available before and after school to help students by appointment. Please encourage your children to advocate for themselves and ask teachers for help. We might not know they need help unless they ask!

Study Hall/Advisory

Middle school students will have study hall with their advisory teachers every day. During these times, students will have the opportunity to complete homework and ask for help. Students are encouraged to connect with teachers at this time for extra help.

Resource Teacher

Mrs. Kohl is available at specific periods of the day to work with students. She teams with MS teachers to help support the learning needs of our students.

Homework Club

Homework Club is an after-school program for students to get extra support. Mrs. Kohl will be available Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays until 4:00 in Room 204 to help students with homework. Students are asked to sign in each time they attend Homework Club. In the past, some students have told their families they were attending Homework Club, but ended up spending time with friends instead. Students attend Homework Club on a voluntary basis, so feel free to check up on your children to make sure they are where they say they are!



Locks

At orientation, students had the option to have locks on their lockers. Most students did not take one, but if they would like one, they can request it from the office.

Box Top\$ for Education

Please continue sending in your grocery receipts to school as many brands still participate in the Box Top\$ for Education program

<https://www.boxtops4education.com/s/box-tops-products>. This has been a great way to earn some extra funds for the school science program. Every label counts. You may send receipts to the main office with a c/o Julie Smisek or directly to me via your child. NOTE: Receipts are only good for two weeks so please send them in right away. Thank you for your continued support.
-Mrs. Smisek



6th Grade MN History Pass

All 6th graders have been given a History Pass from the Historical Society. The pass provides free admission to 6th graders to MN Historical Society sites and museums through August 31, 2023 with a paid adult. 6th graders may visit as often as he/she would like. There may be additional fee for special events. Check mnhs.org for the various sites hours of operation.

Backpacks

Teachers in the main middle school hallway, nearest the lockers, have requested that backpacks stay in lockers. In the past, some students have carried all supplies in their backpacks without using a locker at all. The backpack size and weight have become a tripping hazard in the classroom, are very heavy and physically straining for our middle school students, and impede hallway traffic flow during passing time. Backpacks in the locker have helped students become more organized and allow for easier, safer movement in the classroom. We have already seen improvements in the hallway traffic and in classroom preparation and organization.