

Anchor Bay North

Principal's Corner

James Thiede



IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

September 3rd-First Day of School— Half Day 8:04-11:29am
September 4th-Full Day 8:04am-2:52pm
September 12th-Open House 5-6:30pm
September 16-Oct. 9th-NWEA Testing
September 20th-6th grade Mixer Dance 3-5pm
October 4-Walk a Thon fundraiser
October 4— High School Homecoming
October 18— 7th/8th Dance
October 24-Picture re-takes
November 5— No School-
Nov. 12-7th grade Vision Screening
November 22— 1/2 day
November 25-26-No School-Teacher PD
November 27-29—No School Thanksgiving break
December 11— Holiday Band Concert
December 12-Holiday Choir Concert
December 23-Jan.3-Christmas break-No School
January 20-MLK Day-No school
January 22,23,24,— Half Days— Final Exams
January 24-Last day of 1st semester

August 21st, 2024

Reminders for 1st Day of School

- #1. Our first day of school is a half day on Tuesday, September 3rd-8:04am-11:29am. Students report to their 1st hour, which is also considered their “homeroom”
- #2. We have our first FULL day of school on, Wednesday, September 4th. School starts at 8:04am and ends at 2:52pm.
- #3. Our school opens at 7:35am. **Students will not be allowed inside the building before then.** Students must remain in the commons area until 7:50 when they will be released to their lockers.
- #4. On the first full day of school, all students will get a 30 minute lunch. 7th and 8th grade lunch periods are assigned by their 4th hour teacher. 6th grade students have a separate lunch with only 6th grade students.
- #5. Breakfast and lunch are **FREE** for everyone this year and will be available each day in our Commons area.
- #6. Cell phones can be used before school, during lunch, and after school only. Phones must be left in student lockers outside of those specific time frames. Please refer to our student code of conduct for more information.
- #7. The last day for schedule request changes is Friday, September 6th. Please see page 2 for information on scheduling.
- #8. I have included a newsletter subscription by “The Parent Institute”. The newsletter contains helpful tips for parents of middle school children. I hope you find this information insightful.
- #9. Reminder that all school forms are submitted online now.
- #10. Our annual Walk a Thon fundraiser is scheduled for Friday, October 4th. Students will be bringing home information about the Walk a Thon soon. Money raised from this event has gone towards many important school related initiatives. This is our only fundraiser of the year and we only ask for donations. There is no buying or selling.
- #11. Morning student drop off is a busy time in our parking lot. Over the past few years, I have made it a priority to help the traffic flow and make sure students are safe. I could delegate this to someone else, but I believe it is very important and warrants my presence. That means rain, snow, or shine I will be out there. I would appreciate your help by moving forward as far as possible (up to sign on curb) and having students ready to exit your car. This will help speed up our drop off line. See page 3 for more information. Thank you for your help!

SEE PAGE 2

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Scheduling

As you can imagine scheduling six different classes for over 600 students represents a challenge. We are pleased to report that a vast majority of our students were able to get courses that they chose during enrollment in the spring of last year. **Some courses that your son/daughter may have selected will appear on their schedule for the 2nd semester.** The process used to schedule our students begins with their request forms in the spring. From that information, our district establishes staffing to fulfill the needs of our schools. This staffing may involve teachers moving to another school within the district, or in extreme circumstances, reducing a teacher to part-time, or even laid off. Therefore, our ability to function as a school and a district must have certain guidelines to follow for scheduling. While we make every effort to satisfy the needs of our students, schedule changes are at times difficult to make, and in some cases, not possible. **FINAL SCHEDULES ARE NOT COMPLETE until August 30th.**

Changes in scheduling for our Honors Program are even more difficult. Our Honors Program has strict guidelines for entrance into the program and continued enrollment once in. We believe that potential Honors students should have multiple measures to ensure fairness in the selection process. The guidelines are outlined below:

To request Honors class- Student must meet ALL four requirements

Grade Requirement – at least an A- or higher in Regular class or B- or higher in Honors class

Standardized and District testing requirement- High score in M-Step and NWEA testing

Teacher recommendation- Subject area teacher recommends Honors

Students who request Honors and meet the guidelines listed above are placed on a list for approval. Once the list is finalized, sections for the course are set and teacher staffing is placed. This occurs at the end of each school year. After this process is concluded, there can be no additions.

Once in an Honors course, students must maintain the following guidelines to remain enrolled in the class: Students must have and maintain a B+ or better within ALL grade categories (i.e. Assessments, Homework, Participation, etc.) within each Honors course. The student's grades will be evaluated at the following intervals:

First quarter Progress Report

End of the First Quarter

Second quarter Progress Report

End of the Second Quarter

Third quarter Progress Report

End of the Third Quarter

Fourth quarter Progress Report

End of the Fourth Quarter

1st Semester Grade

2nd Semester Grade

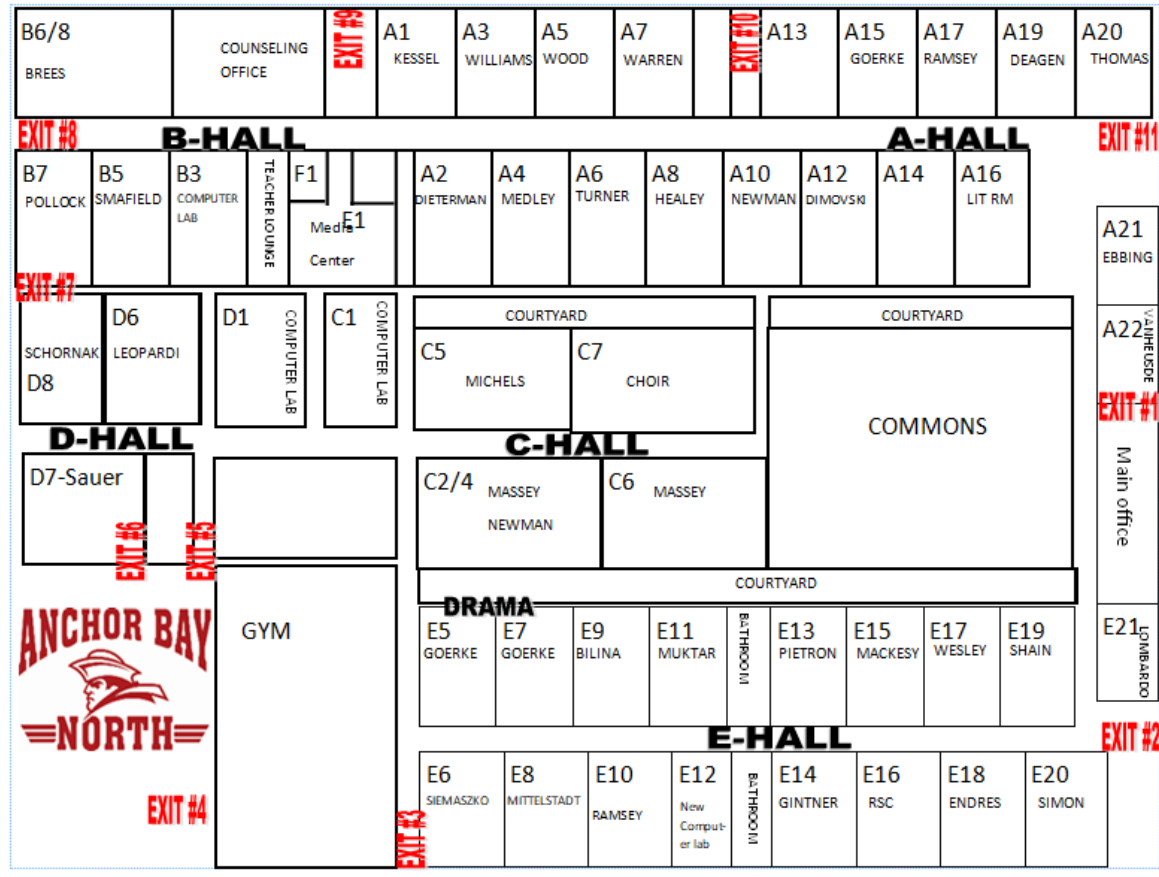
If a student falls below the grade requirements, he or she will be placed on Academic Honors Probation for the remainder of the year in that honors course(s). The student has until the next grade evaluation to raise and maintain his or her grade to a B- (80% or better) within ALL grade categories. If the student does not maintain the required average, he or she will be removed from that particular Honors course(s) and placed into the regular curriculum. I hope this information is useful and gives you a better understanding of our scheduling process.

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Bus Only Loop



Please pull forward to sign

Parent Drop Off Students enter door #1

To keep traffic flow moving, please pull up as far as possible to drop off your son/daughter. Please do not stop in front of the main doors, instead continue forward before dropping off. To speed up the process, please have your child gather their belonging and be ready for drop off. Thank you for your help!



Important start of the year Cell Phone reminder—Pictures and Videos

In the past, some students have faced disciplinary suspensions and/or action from local law enforcement agencies for inappropriate use of social media. While some activities were meant to be lighthearted and funny, others were created with the intention to mock, bully, and shame other students. Even if your child isn't the one creating accounts or posting pictures, if he/she is "following" the account or liking posts, it contributes to the problem.

So, in an effort to protect everyone and make our school a safe place where bullying/shaming is NOT tolerated at all, I wanted to take this time to remind you that according to our handbook policy, students are prohibited from taking **photos/videos during school hours**. This rule is meant to help prevent inappropriate social media issues. Your child may not be affected by this, but when a problem could affect one of our students, it is everyone's responsibility to be proactive and contribute to the solution. We are a community, and we need to respect and protect everyone here at Anchor Bay NORTH.

Please support us at home by having a conversation with your child about appropriate and safe phone usage. Reminder of Anchor Bay North Cell Phone Policy: Students caught using the video or camera capabilities during the school day without prior approval of the administration, teacher, and or staff member will be subject to discipline up to suspension from school. The administration reserves the right to accelerate consequences, as necessary. This policy can be found in our student code of conduct.



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Middle School Parents

Anchor Bay Middle School North

***still** make the difference!*



Goals can help your middle schooler start the year fresh

It's a new academic year and an opportunity for students to start the year with a clean slate. Encourage your child to establish goals for the year in these areas:

- **Schoolwork.** Middle schoolers need to keep track of multiple assignments in multiple classes. Suggest that your child set a goal to be more organized. Provide tools to help, such as folders, binder dividers, sticky notes and a calendar.
- **Projects.** Suggest that your child plan to break large assignments into small parts and write down deadlines for each step. That way your middle schooler can tackle one step at a time without getting overwhelmed.
- **Writing.** Challenge your middle schooler to strengthen writing skills by writing in a journal for a few minutes every day. Keeping writing skills sharp will make school-related writing easier.
- **Reading.** Reading for pleasure strengthens literacy skills. So help your child create reading goals, such as reading for 15 minutes every night before going to bed.
- **Extracurricular activities.** After-school activities can help students blow off steam and build important skills. Encourage your child to participate in at least one activity this school year. However, remind your child that schoolwork should always be the priority.

Missing school affects more than grades



Missing too much school hurts middle schoolers' academic performance in several ways. Studies show

that kids who are frequently absent are likelier than their peers to:

- Repeat a grade.
- Get expelled.
- Drop out of school.

So don't let your child convince you that missing class is "no big deal."

Attendance in every class is important—and it's your child's number one responsibility. To support regular, on-time attendance:

- **Be firm.** Every vague complaint shouldn't be a ticket to a day off. Follow the school's health protocols for suspected illnesses.
- **Be mindful.** Make medical appointments and schedule family trips during non-school hours when possible.
- **Be understanding.** Acknowledge that school is not always fun. Your middle schooler may appreciate your honesty.
- **Be proactive.** If your child is avoiding school, find out why. Then, talk to the school counselor about ways to help.

Source: P.W. Jordan and R. Miller, *Who's In: Chronic Absenteeism under the Every Student Succeeds Act*, FutureEd.

SEE PAGE 6



School counselors offer support to middle school students



School counselors are here to offer your child academic and mental health support. They have specialized training that allows them to help students as they face the unique challenges of middle school.

You or your child can ask a school counselor for help to:

- **Set and meet goals.** The counselor can help your child define goals to achieve in school this year and beyond. The counselor can then suggest classes and activities to help your child meet those goals.
- **Resolve conflicts.** If your child is struggling with something in school—whether academic or

social—the counselor can offer support and guidance.

- **Find additional support.** From therapy to tutoring, the counselor can assist with finding outside resources that can help your child thrive.

“Middle school counselors enhance the learning process and promote academic, career and social/emotional development.”

—American School Counselor Association

Discuss the facts about drugs and alcohol with your child



In middle school, students are far more likely to be exposed to drugs and alcohol than they were in elementary school. But they are less likely to experiment with them if they have received strong anti-drug messages from their families. That's why it's vital that you speak honestly and openly to your child about the dangers of substance abuse.

Address common misconceptions your child may have, such as:

- **“If it's so bad for you, why do you and other adults drink?”** Alcohol use is legal for adults 21 and older. Adults, with mature brains, can safely consume limited amounts of alcohol, if they choose. There is no safe amount of alcohol for a growing brain.
- **“As long as no one is driving, it's not a big deal.”** Alcohol

and recreational drugs are both dangerous and illegal for middle schoolers. An arrest for either one will establish a record. Use at school can lead to suspension or expulsion.

- **“My friends say trying it a few times won't hurt anyone.”** In fact, studies have shown that young brains are especially susceptible to drug and alcohol addictions.
- **“Everyone says it makes you feel good.”** The “good” feeling is temporary and deceiving. In the long term, both physical and mental health can be damaged.

If you or anyone in your family is struggling with substance abuse, call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357). The call is confidential.

Are you setting your child up for future success?



The choices students make in middle school can affect their future academic success. Are you doing all you can

to set your middle schooler up for future success? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below to find out:

- ___ **1. Do you encourage** taking classes that are as rigorous as your child can handle well?
- ___ **2. Do you talk about** the importance of reading, and urge your middle schooler to read often?
- ___ **3. Do you follow** the news together and encourage your child to learn about current affairs to boost awareness of civics and history?
- ___ **4. Do you encourage** your child to take a foreign language? Starting in middle school can give your child a foundation for high school.
- ___ **5. Do you discuss** your middle schooler's interests and ways they might translate to a career?

How well are you doing?

Mostly *yes* answers mean you are helping your middle schooler prepare for the future. For *no* answers, try those ideas.

Middle School Parents

still make the difference!

Practical Ideas for Parents to Help Their Children.

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Movement, stretching breaks and nutritious food aid learning



Some middle schoolers can't seem to sit still during study time, while others can't seem to stop snacking. Is this normal?

The short answer is yes. Your child is entering adolescence, which marks the biggest period of physical change since infancy.

Middle schoolers often:

- **Get up out of their chairs.** As adolescents grow, their bones (including their tailbones) begin to harden. Sitting too long can cause nerve pain. Getting up is a natural defense against that discomfort. Your child may want to try doing some assignments at home standing up. Some students like to study as they walk around their homes or neighborhood.
- **Fidget.** Even if they manage to stay seated, middle schoolers spend lots

of time fidgeting. In adolescence, bone growth outpaces muscle growth, meaning kids' muscles are constantly being tugged and pulled. This causes so-called "growing pains." Stretching can help relieve them, so encourage regular stretch breaks during study time.

- **Raid the refrigerator.** It's not just middle schoolers' bones and muscles that are growing. Their stomachs are, too—and it takes more food to fill them. Not only that, but all that physical growth requires serious amounts of nutritious fuel. Stock up on healthy foods like sliced raw veggies that your child can munch while studying.

Source: P. Lorain, "Squirring Comes Naturally to Middle School Students," National Education Association.

Taking notes helps students remember what they learn



Taking notes can benefit students in many ways. Creating a written record helps students remember what the teacher said in

class. Reviewing class notes is also an effective way to study for tests.

To get the most from note-taking, your middle schooler should:

- **Take notes by hand** rather than with a computer if possible. A recent study shows that writing by hand aids in learning and memory.
- **Think about what is important.** Your child should listen for names, dates, times of events and other key information. And if the teacher writes something on the board, your child should include it.

- **Review and rewrite notes** after class. Rewriting them ensures your child will be able to read them. It also helps the information stick in your child's mind.
- **Enlist a friend.** Your child can compare notes with a classmate. Maybe the friend picked up something your child missed.
- **Stay organized.** Encourage your child to use a binder that has different sections, labeled with the name of each class. Suggest putting the date on notes and filing them in the appropriate section.

Source: F.R. Van der Weel and A.L. Van der Meer, "Handwriting but not typewriting leads to widespread brain connectivity: a high-density EEG study with implications for the classroom," *Frontiers in Psychology*.

Q: My middle schooler wakes up exhausted every morning and I'm worried it will have a negative effect on learning and schoolwork this year. What can I do?

Questions & Answers

A: A few minutes of lost shut-eye today, a few minutes tomorrow—those minutes add up. Pretty soon, your middle schooler is cranky, overtired and struggling in school.

To make sure your child gets enough sleep each night:

- **Review your child's bedtime.** Middle schoolers need between eight and 10 hours of sleep each night to function their best in class.
- **Have your child "unplug"** one hour before bed. That means no TV, computer or digital devices in the hour leading up to lights-out. Instead, read or play a board game together. This will help your child ease into "sleep mode." Experts also recommend middle schoolers charge their phones away from their bedrooms at night!
- **Avoid caffeine.** Consuming caffeine up to six hours before bedtime can disrupt sleep. So make sure your child stays away from coffee, many sodas and tea. Watch out for energy drinks, too—they also contain the stimulant.
- **Beware of long naps.** Too much sleep during the day can make it harder to fall asleep at night. If your middle schooler needs to take a nap, keep it under 60 minutes.
- **Take time to talk.** Your middle schooler may be lying awake worrying at night. Remember, your child is not too old for you to have a reassuring talk together before lights-out.



It Matters: The Family-School Team

School safety begins with communication



Schools today take many steps to keep students safe. But they can't do it alone—they need families' help.

One of the most effective ways you can contribute to a safe school environment is to discuss what's going on at school and in your child's life every day.

Have open discussions with your middle schooler about:

- **The school discipline policy.** Talk about the reasons for certain rules. Review the consequences for breaking the rules.
- **The school's safety** and security procedures. If you don't know what they are, find out.
- **Personal safety issues**, such as ways to keep safe when traveling to and from school.
- **Your own family values**, rules and expectations for your child.
- **The impact of violence** in the media—TV, books, video games, music and movies.
- **Strategies for solving problems** peacefully and diffusing tense situations.
- **Concerns about friends** or classmates who may be dangerous to themselves or others.
- **Social media** and the need to use it responsibly.
- **The importance of telling a teacher** or other adult if your child sees something that doesn't seem right.

If you hear something that concerns you, inform the school immediately. Schools are safest when families, students and educators work together.

Being involved benefits you and your family in three ways

Family engagement at the middle school level is just as important as it was in elementary school. Students' grades, test scores, attendance and behavior all tend to be better when families are aware of what is going on at school and how to help.

But your child is not the only one who benefits when you are engaged. Here are three ways being involved also benefits you:

1. **You understand more** about how the school works. Perhaps you come from an area where the school system is different from the one where you are currently living.
2. **You learn whom to contact** if you have concerns. You know your child's teachers, the school counselor and are familiar with the administrators.
3. **The school** will have a better understanding of you and your



family. Perhaps English is not your first language. Perhaps you need support. School staff may be able to direct you to resources for help. And if the staff knows your family's situation, they can better respond to your child's needs at school.

Your middle schooler doesn't like a teacher—now what?



Middle schoolers often dislike teachers who they feel are too tough, give too many assignments or give hard tests.

- If your child dislikes a teacher:
- **Find out why.** Ask your child exactly what the teacher says or does that inspires dislike.
 - **Remind your child** that it's not the teacher's job to be popular. Your middle schooler doesn't have to *like* the teacher's personality to *learn* from the teacher.
 - **Realize** that in most cases, your child will need to accept the situation. Middle school is more challenging and rigorous than elementary school. Your middle schooler may have to study harder and work longer.
 - **Talk to the teacher.** If you believe there may be a personal issue between a teacher and your child, ask the teacher for a conference. Listen calmly, offer your insight and work together to develop a plan to go forward.