

Letter from the Assistant Superintendent

Middle schools continue to move from good to great. The faculty, staff, students and administrators have enjoyed an exciting year filled with numerous honors and awards.

This handbook, *In the Middle*, has contributed to the outstanding performance of schools in the middle school division. The handbook gives information to students and parents about middle grades. It is organized by grade level to make it easier to find information. A glossary is included for help in understanding common words and phrases associated with middle school. The section "Getting Ready For High School" details important steps for eighth-graders to take in preparation for high school. The curriculum section has lists of suggested books that many middle school students enjoy reading.

The middle school division is committed to the guiding principles for middle-level education: a rigorous and challenging curriculum, a safe and supportive environment, committed educators trained in middle-grades education, a caring adult-child relationship for every student, and effective parent-school-community communication. Our goal is to have successful schools for all adolescents.

We look forward to working with parents and students as partners in education.

Sincerely,



Carol Montague-Davis

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Guiding Principles for Middle-Level Education



Rigorous and challenging curriculum for all



Safe and supportive environment



Promote effective and cooperative parent-school communication, high levels of parent involvement with opportunities for business and community involvement with each middle school

Educators trained and committed to middle level education



An opportunity for every child to have a caring and mentoring adult-child relationship



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Editing by Theo Helm; design by Timothy Porter.

Thank you to the Capistrano Unified School District, San Juan Capistrano, California, for permission to use selected material in this handbook.

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Policies

Policies regarding middle school students and other students are included in the Student-Parent Handbook and on the school system's website at wsfcs.k12.nc.us. Policies also are available from the school system's Marketing and Communications Office, 727-2696, and the school system attorney's office, 727-2509.



In compliance with federal laws, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Middle School Glossary

The middle school years come with their own vocabulary. Some common words and phrases:

A/B Day classes: Rotation of classes for electives.

Academically Gifted: Classes offered at all schools. The Highly Academically Gifted (HAG) program is housed at Hanes Middle School.

Agendas: Planners/calendars divided by academic subjects that allow students to record assignments. This is also a tool for parent/teacher communication.

AR: Accelerated Readers.

Cable 2: Channel on Time Warner Cable that airs educational programs and information about current school events.

Core classes: Math, science, language arts and social studies. Courses in these subjects are required for all students in middle school.

Encore classes: Elective classes such as art, music, physical education and foreign language.

English as a Second Language (ESL): Instruction in English for students who have difficulty understanding, speaking, reading or writing English because it is not their primary language. ESL classes are offered at Clemmons, East Forsyth, Flat Rock, Hanes, Hill, Kernersville, Mineral Springs, Northwest, Philo, Southeast and Wiley. Students new to this country are tested at the Newcomer Registration Center, which is at the Downtown Marketplace. The ESL Academy at the Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy serves students who cannot read or write fluently in English or their native languages.

EOCs: End-of-course tests given in June to students in high-school classes such as Algebra I and Geometry.

EOGs: End-of-grade tests given in May to sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders in reading and math. Eighth-graders also take an end-of-grade test in science.

Exceptional Children: All schools offer instruction that supports and parallels state standards to the extent possible. Each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) is the basis for instruction. Students with greater needs are served at Lowrance Middle.

Extracurricular activities: Programs and activities beyond a school's curriculum, including athletics, academic clubs and activities.

Future-Ready Core Course of Study: Once students reach high school, they must meet the requirements of the Future-Ready Core Course of Study to graduate. It includes 21 total credits, including four English credits, four math credits, four science credits and three social studies credits.

Homebase/home room: Time for attendance to be taken.

Honor roll: Students must have averages of 3.0 or better and no Ds or Fs.

Interdisciplinary units: Academic units covering multiple core subjects.

Internet: The school system's website is wsfcs.k12.nc.us. Schools also have their own websites.

Interscholastic activities: Competition between middle schools in academics and sports. Academic competitions include Battle of the Books, MathCounts, National Academic League, Odyssey of the Mind, Science Olympiad and Spelling Bee. Sports include boys and girls soccer, volleyball, basketball and track. All students may compete in academic activities; sports are limited to seventh- and eighth-graders. These may vary according to school.

Intramurals: Sports and activities organized within the school. These are open to all grade levels and may vary according to school.

It's My Call: A voluntary alcohol- and drug-testing program. Participation is a family decision.

ISS: In-school suspension.

Magnet schools: Schools with specialized programs that serve students across the district. Students apply to the schools, which offer dedicated programs such as arts and leadership. More information about magnet schools is on page 30.

Middle school concept: The belief that successful middle schools include being centered on adolescent needs, interdisciplinary teaming, advisory programs, varied instruction, exploratory programs, and a transition program between elementary school and high school.

Middle school themes: Each middle school has a theme that helps define learning in that school. See information about individual schools for their themes.

National Academic League (NAL): An academic competition between schools that uses questions based on national standards.

National Junior Honor Society: For students who meet academic requirements and are invited to join. Please ask your counselor for details.

Parent Advisory Council: Group made up of one parent from each school that meets monthly with the superintendent of the school system.

Parent Assistant: The online system that allows you to keep up with your child's homework assignments, grades and other school activities on a daily basis. Ask your child's school for your login and password.

Parent communication: Includes work samples, school or team newsletters and field trip forms, which are sent home weekly. Progress reports for core courses are sent out every three weeks. Encore class reports are sent out mid-quarter. Schools also use their own websites and automated phone calls to communicate.

PTA or PTSA: Parent-Teacher Association or Parent-Teacher-Student Association.

Teaming: Students are assigned to a group of teachers to share their core subjects.