



Frequently Asked Questions


- Q. Can parents get involved with the middle school program?
- A. *Yes! There is lots of need for parent involvement. Opportunities include chaperoning field trips, helping out in the Library, assisting with Color Day and running Spartan Block activities. In addition, the PTA always needs parents to organize grade level activities like the yearbook committee and 8th grade graduation.*
- Q. Can I monitor my child's grades online?
- A. *Yes. Your child's grades, attendance, and discipline information are all available online through our "Home Access" program. You need to have your school-issued username and password to access it. This information is usually distributed at Back to School night in September.*
- Q. How many report cards will my child receive in the middle school?
- A. *The school year is divided into four marking periods. A report card will be issued at the end of each marking period. Interim reports are issued at the mid-point of each marking period to keep parents informed of their child's status at that time. Check the district calendar for distribution dates.*

Keeping Your Child Safe Online

Electronic devices are quickly becoming children's preferred mode of communication. Therefore, it is important for parents to take an active role in their child's cyber life. Here are some tips to keep your child safe online:

- ⇒ Monitor cell phone and computer use closely. It is recommended that computers be installed in locations where adults can supervise easily (Ex - family room, den, etc.)
- ⇒ Insist on full access to your children's online activity.
- ⇒ Report inappropriate postings and block inappropriate posters.
- ⇒ Collect children's cell phones before bedtime to ensure that your child gets a good night's rest without cyber interruptions.
- ⇒ Contact school authorities if a cyber issue outside of school isn't resolved in a timely fashion.
- ⇒ Monitor sleepovers in your home closely. Make sure that it is impossible for overnight guests to access your family's computers or cell phones in the middle of the night.

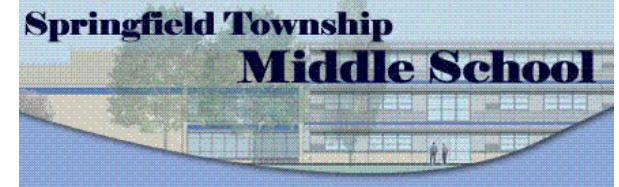
Questions or comments?
Contact the STMS School
Counselor,
Mrs. Judy Smith at
judith_smith@sdst.org or
check out the STMS
Guidance Office homepage
at www.sdst.org



Making the Transition to Middle School



A Guide for Parents and Caregivers



Home Sweet Home

- All of the 6th grade homerooms are located on the first floor of the middle school building. Most 6th grade academic classes are held on that floor too. Your child will study the following academic subjects: Math, Social Studies, Language Arts, and Science.
- Sixth graders travel to other parts of the building for Specials. The sixth grade specials are:
 - “**Quarterly” Specials**” - Ten weeks each of Music, Art, Health, and Technology.
 - “**Alternating” Specials**: Students are exposed to other specials during a 6 day rotation. These offerings include physical education each year as well as two other electives.
- The 6th grade runs an academic and behavioral reward program called “Effort Honor Roll.” Each quarter, a day is set aside for an activity or trip to reward students for doing their homework and making good choices.

Tips for Parents/Caregivers

- ◇ Bring your child to the middle school during the summer to help them get comfortable with the building. Point out the important features like the entrances, the bus circle, bike racks, etc. Call the Main Office and schedule a tour of the building.
- ◇ Buy a combination lock for your child to practice with before the school year begins. While s/he will have to use a school-issued lock once the school year begins, practicing over the summer will help build your child's confidence.
- ◇ Encourage your child to get involved in a school club or activity. This will help your child learn how to work within a group and have fun!
- ◇ Pack lunches and lay out the next day's outfit the night before.
- ◇ Create a consistent supervised study time and routine for your child. Establish a study area that can easily be monitored. Turn off the television during homework time and check all completed work. Encourage your child to pack his/her backpack each night to save time in the morning.
- ◇ Encourage your child to ask for help when needed. There are varying levels of support available at the middle school. If you are concerned about your child's progress, contact his/her teachers and discuss the matter before it gets too far out of control. If necessary, schedule a team meeting with your child's entire team of teachers. Team meetings can be scheduled through your child's homeroom teacher.
- ◇ Be sure to call the school's absence line if your child is ever absent. That number is listed on the District's website. When your child returns to school, send in a note explaining the reason for the absence or lateness to ensure that excused absences are marked as such. Notes can be dropped off in the Main Office.
- ◇ The middle school “experience” sometimes involves social drama. Try to respond to your child's reports as objectively as you can. You can empower your child by helping him/her brainstorm solutions for themselves.

