

# Middle Creek High School



## Freshman Planning Guide

2007-2008

Website: <http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/>

Phone: (919) 773-3838

Fax: (919) 773-3880



# Table of Contents

Welcome .....	4
People and Resources to Know .....	4
Academics	
Overview of Block Scheduling & Grading Practices .....	5
Signing Up for SPAN .....	5
End-of-Course Testing Requirements .....	6
Graduation Project .....	7
Getting to Graduation	
Courses of Study .....	8
UNC Minimum Requirements .....	9
Class Rank & Grade Point Averages (GPA) .....	9
Avoiding Academic Problems	
Academic Tips from teachers .....	10
Four-Year Planning .....	11
Making Good Choices .....	12
Get Connected: Student Activities & Athletics .....	14
Parent Involvement .....	15
Driver's Education .....	16
Work Permits & Career Opportunities .....	16

Our goal is for you to be informed and ready!!

Information is the key to life as a high school parent. One of our goals with this publication is to provide you with as much information as possible. Since new information and resources are constantly available, we also want to be sure you know the quickest, most effective ways of getting information.

The most important rule is this — **When in doubt, ASK!!** This rule applies both to your student and to teachers and staff at MCHS.

parent info ...

## student info ...

### Why bother with this book?

One word — **choices**. High school may just now be beginning for you, but soon enough you will be approaching graduation and you are going to want to have as many choices as possible as far as what you do next. The purpose of this book is to ensure that you are aware of all of the resources and choices that will lead up to that day. Make the most of it!

# Welcome ...

## Dear Students,

Congratulations! You have finally made it! Welcome to Middle Creek High School. Our Freshman Academy wants to make sure that your transition to high school is smooth and easy. The following guidebook will not only help you survive, but will also help provide you with the essential skills to start your high school experience off on the right foot.

The Freshman Academy will provide you with support to ease your adjustment and opportunities for you to succeed. Our mission is to provide a nurturing environment fostering academic and personal growth. If you ever have questions or concerns, feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,  
MCHS Freshman Academy Faculty

## Dear Parents,

Welcome to high school!

This is an exciting and anxious time for your freshman and for you, the parents. This first year, the freshman year, is critical to the success of your student in high school and beyond. This guide has been developed to help you and your student transition successfully from middle school to high school. This guide contains important information on several relevant topics.

Keep this guide visible throughout the upcoming school year! Take some time to read through it and prepare for this exciting year!

Sincerely,  
The Freshman Academy Teachers

## People & Resources to Know ...

The people listed below are some staff members who will be working with freshmen throughout the school year.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Email (@wcpss.net)</u>
Principal	Mr. Williams	jhwilliams
Asst. Principal for 9th Grade	Mr. Nyhuis	jnyhuis
9th Grade Counselor	TBA	TBA
SAP Counselor	Mr. Coley	bcoley
Athletic Director	Mr. Owens	lowens1
Faculty Sponsor	Mr. Warren	bwarren
	Ms. Fitch	mfitch
Lunchtime Tutoring	Mr. Scialdone	mscialdone

There are some common topics or issues that parents will deal with or have questions about throughout the year. The lists below may help you direct your questions.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
Attendance	Ms. Korff	661-5461
Guidance Office	Ms. Burnette	773-3848
Main Office	Ms. Eagleson	773-3838
School Resource Officer	Officer Orr	773-3859

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
Calendar	<a href="http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/calendar/">http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/calendar/</a>
Career Development	<a href="http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/careers.htm">http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/careers.htm</a>
Clubs	<a href="http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/clubs.htm">http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/clubs.htm</a>
Driver's Education	<a href="http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/driversed.htm">http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/driversed.htm</a>
Freshman Information	<a href="http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/freshmen.htm">http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/freshmen.htm</a>
Student Handbook	<a href="http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/studenthandbook.htm">http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/studenthandbook.htm</a>

### ***What is the block schedule?***

Students will have four courses each semester. Each class lasts 90 minutes which allows teachers to fully explore course content through a variety of activities. Every effort is made to balance schedules with two core courses and two electives each semester where possible.

### ***How is a freshman promoted?***

A freshman is required to have six (6) credits to be promoted to be a sophomore.

These six credits must be:

- An English I credit;
- Two credits from Science, Math, or Social Studies; and,
- Three elective credits

### ***How are grades calculated?***

This varies from teacher to teacher. Students should receive a copy of each teacher's grading practices in the first few days of school. Parents should request a copy of this document.

For example, a science class may have four different tasks: tests, activities, projects, and quizzes. Each task would be weighted according to the teacher's discretion: tests could be weighted at 40%, activities as 30%, etc. These weights would be used to calculate the quarter grades.

### ***Be sure that you ask each teacher the following questions:***

- What is the best way to contact you?
- How often can I expect to see a progress report?
- How often should I expect him/her to have homework?
- How can I help him/her prepare for tests?

### ***Sign up for SPAN now!!***

Four classes. Club meetings. Athletic games and practices. Community service. Work schedules. Family and friends. With the lives of both students and parents busier than ever, Wake County launched a new program to keep parents and students informed with up-to-date information. Students and parents will have online access to student information via a program called the Student-Parent Assistant Module, or SPAN.

*How do you get access to this system?* Students have already been given usernames and passwords. Parents can also be given their own username and passwords by completing one of two forms. One form can be notarized and mailed back to the school. The other can be brought back to the school and presented with a photo ID.

*What is the benefit?* With SPAN, parents have real-time information "on demand" and at their convenience. There is no need to wait for interims or report cards. Teachers can post messages to keep parent informed. See at any time absences and tardies to class.

## **STAY INFORMED!**

In the end, it is up to the students to make the grades. The most effective, useful thing that parents can do is stay informed about student progress and needs.

Some strategies to use:

- check SPAN regularly;
- email teachers regularly to check-in; and,
- when you see a problem, ask questions—starting with the student.

parent info ...

### **WCPSS Grading Scale**

- A = 93—100
- B = 85—92
- C = 77—84
- D = 70-76
- F = Below 70

### **How is a final average calculated?**

*For EOC Courses:*  
37.5% - Quarter 1 or 3  
37.5% - Quarter 2 or 4  
25% - Exam Grade

*For Non-EOC Courses:*  
40% - Quarter 1 or 3  
40% - Quarter 2 or 4  
20% - Exam Grade

# Getting a Solid Start With Academics

# End-of-Course Testing ...

## *Understanding How to Meet the Graduation Requirements*

### ***What courses have End-of-Course Tests?***

End-of-Course, or EOC, tests are state tests that are required for certain high school courses. EOCs are administered as the final exam in the following courses:

Algebra I	English I
Algebra II	Geometry
Biology	Physical Science
Chemistry	Physics
Civics & Economics	US History

### ***How are EOCs scored?***

EOC exams count as 25% the final grade for the course. While each exam gets a score on a 100-point scale just like any other exam, it is also issued an achievement level that is much like grade-level exams in elementary and middle schools. They are:

**Level I:** Students performing at this level do not have sufficient mastery of knowledge and skills in this subject area to be successful at the next more advanced level.

**Level II:** Students performing at this level demonstrate inconsistent mastery of knowledge and skills in this subject area and are minimally prepared to be successful at the next level or more advanced course.

**Level III:** Students performing at this level consistently demonstrate mastery of this subject matter and skills and are well prepared for the next level or more advanced subject.

**Level IV:** Students performing at this level consistently perform in a superior manner clearly beyond that required to be proficient in this subject matter and are very well prepared for the next level or more advanced subject.

The state has determined that students at Levels III and IV are at or above grade level or course expectations.

### ***New Graduation Requirements***

Starting with 9th graders in Fall 2006, students must pass each of the following EOCs with a Level III or higher in order to graduate:

English I	Algebra I
Biology	Civics & Economics
US History	

Below are some frequently asked questions about the EOC requirements.

*Q: What happens if I do not pass the EOC?*

**A:** It depends. If you pass the course, you will be given the opportunity to retest and meet the requirement. If you fail the course, then you will retake the course and start over.

*Q: What if I still have not passed after the retest?*

**A:** Students can retest twice. If after that point you still have not met the testing requirement of making a Level III, your work will be evaluated by a review committee. That committee has three options:

- Accept your work as having met the requirement. (This is rare.)
- Require additional recovery / remediation work from you before deciding that you have met the requirement.
- Determine that you have not met the standards of the course and that you should repeat the course.

*Q: Do the retests affect the final grade for the course?*

**A:** No. The final grade is calculated before retesting begins.

## student info ...

The primary key to success in a block schedule course is **ATTENDANCE!** Being there is the first, best thing you can do to set yourself up for success. When you miss school, you miss lecture, notes, class, discussions, etc. Be sure to get what you missed. If you know you'll be out — be sure to get the work ahead of time.

## Why not start the graduation project during the 9th grade year?

Freshmen have a number of pressures during this first year — both transition to high schools and passing the end-of-course tests. Once we've accomplished this, we have a solid foundation to start thinking about the graduation project. Remember, many school districts complete the ENTIRE project during one semester. In the end, it is not as big as you imagine if you work with us along the way.

parent info

### ***What is the Graduation Project?***

Starting with the freshman class that started in the fall of 2006, all students in North Carolina are required to complete a graduation project before they can receive a diploma. There are four components of the graduation project.

- A **research** paper that demonstrates your ability to conduct research and write in-depth about a topic. (This will be completed in your junior year.)
- A tangible **product** that could be a service or experience related to your research topic. (This will be completed by the end of English IV.)
- A **portfolio** containing your reflective writings or other evidence of your process and progress. (This will be started during the junior year and completed as a part of English IV.)
- An oral **presentation** that represents your entire process from beginning to end made before school and community members. (This will be completed at the end of the semester you take English IV. The presentation is usually in front of 5-8 people.)

While the components of the graduation project and the standards are set by the state, the exact plan of answering questions of when and how is up to MCHS.

### ***What do I need to do now?***

During their freshman year, students will focus on building the research and critical thinking skills that are necessary later for the research project and paper. This will happen primarily through World History and Healthful Living classes. There will be little mention of the graduation project in the freshman year. The goal during this year is to build a foundation of skills necessary to be successful.

During the sophomore year, students will work on writing skills and begin exploring some possible topics for the graduation project. During this year, there will be greater explanation and understanding of the structure of the project. For more information on the graduation project, visit the MCHS website.

### ***Is there any advantage to getting started now? Are all schools using this same plan?***

There are several school systems in North Carolina who have been working on these projects for years now. Their experience tells us that it is difficult enough to have students not want to change topics in the middle of the project when the project is confined to the senior year. Picking a topic in the freshman year usually just leads to a new topic later on as interests change and other opportunities present themselves.

Some other schools in Wake County have students complete the project in their sophomore year. However, they do this to meet the requirements of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Most Wake County schools are following the same basic schedule that we are.

***For more information,*** see Mr. Pittman or your counselor.

## Graduation Project

# Getting to Graduation ...

## *Four-Year Planning, Graduation Requirements, and New Expectations*

### **What are the Courses of Study?**

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has set four courses of study for all North Carolina high school students. The courses of study are:

- ◆ **College / University Prep** (26 Credits): Prepares students for a four-year college or university.
- ◆ **College Tech Prep** (26 Credits): Prepares students for admission into a two-year college
- ◆ **Career Prep** (26 Credits) Prepares students for entry-level career choice or admission to a community college
- ◆ **Occupational Course of Study** (22 Credits): Program for selected Special Programs students.

### **What are the similarities between College/University Prep, College Tech Prep, and Career Prep?**

There are some core requirements that all of these courses of study have in common. They are:

- ◆ **English** (4 Credits): English I, II, III, and IV
- ◆ **Science** (3 Credits): Biology, a Physical Science, and an Earth / Environmental Science
- ◆ **Social Studies** (3 Credits): World History, Civics & Economics, and US History
- ◆ **Health / PE** (1 Credit): Healthful Living

All students in these courses of study also must show proficiency in Computer Skills, Competency Reading, and Competency Math through state testing.

### **What are the differences between College/University Prep, College Tech Prep, and Career Prep?**

The chart below shows the places where the courses of study are different.

	<b>COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PREP</b> <i>Course of Study Requirements</i>	<b>COLLEGE TECH PREP</b> <i>Course of Study Requirements</i>	<b>CAREER PREP</b> <i>Course of Study Requirements</i>
Mathematics	<b>4 Credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and a higher level course for which Algebra II is a prerequisite	<b>3 Credits:</b> Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II; <i>or</i> Algebra I, Tech Math I and II	<b>3 Credits:</b> Three courses to include Algebra I
Second Languages	<b>2 Credits:</b> Two credits in the same language	No Credits Required	No Credits Required
Pathway	No Pathway Required	Students on the College Tech Prep Course of Study need to select a Career Pathway. From this pathway, students will need to complete four courses, one of those being a second level or completer course.	Students on the Career Course of Study will need to complete four classes, one being a second level or completer course in a Career Pathway or Fine Arts Pathway.

### **What are the requirements of the Occupational Course of Study?**

Students in the Occupational Course of Study are required to have four credits in Occupational English, three credits in Occupational Math, two credits in Science, two credits in Social Studies, six credits in Occupational Preparation, four credits in CTE electives, a Healthful Living credit, and other requires such as work hours, portfolio completion and other standards as outlined in the IEP and course of study.

## student info ...

**How do you decide which course of study is best for you?** The best thing to do is to create a four-year plan that allows you the chance to graduate on multiple courses of study. The goal is for you to have as many options in your senior year as possible!

*\*\* Note: If at any point this document differs from the High School Planning Guide, the wording in the Planning Guide will supersede this document.*

## University of North Carolina System Minimum Requirements

Students meet the UNC system minimum requirements when they meet the College / University Course of Study

A freshman year is a critical year for many reasons. One reason is that this is the first year to begin thinking about plans for after graduation. The freshman year is the first step in a student's journey to a college or university. In fact, when you send transcripts and applications, one-third of the grades on the transcript will come from the freshman year. It is important that you and your counselor map out all four years of high school and make sure that all minimum requirements are met. Ultimately, meeting the requirements is up to you and your parents!

### What are class rank and GPA?

Both class rank and Grade Point Average (or GPA) are based on final grades in courses. Final grades, by the way, are all that is reported on your transcript. Exam grades and quarter grades are not included.

Grade point average, or GPA, is simply the average of your semester grades starting with the freshman year. Your GPA is calculated by dividing the total amount of grade points earned by the total amount of credit hours attempted. An example of how you calculate GPA is in the graphic below

Colleges look at your GPA and class rank. Class rank just means where you are in comparison to the rest of your class. Because GPAs are used to determine class rank, you must have a high GPA in order to have an impressive class rank. The student with the highest GPA is number one, or the valedictorian.

Note that some courses taken in middle school like Algebra I may count towards meeting the graduation requirement but does not count toward GPA or towards credits for graduation.

Plan for everything and experience everything!

All students are encouraged to have an elective pathway in their four-year plan. This is a sequence of four electives that fit together. This provides a student additional avenues to meet graduation requirements. See your registration guide for details.

Also, plan to meet with your counselor at least once per year. She is the one who will be writing recommendations and she can help you through the ups and downs of high school.

parent info

<u>How to calculate your weighted GPA</u>	<u>Quality points scale</u>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Use the scale to assign quality points to each grade.</li><li>2. Add up all of the quality points to get the total.</li><li>3. Divide total quality points by the total number of credits.</li><li>4. Compare this number to corresponding letter grade.</li></ol>	<b>Standard Class</b> A=4.0 B=3.0 C=2.0 D=1.0 F=0.0	<b>Honors Class</b> A=5.0 B=4.0 C=3.0 D=2.0 F=0.0	<b>AP Class</b> A=6.0 B=5.0 C=4.0 D=3.0 F=0.0
<b>GPA</b> A=4.0 B=3.0 C=2.0 D=1.0 F=0.0	<b>EXAMPLE</b> Grades: English—B, Math—A, Science—C, Social Studies—C, Foreign Language—B, Elective—A <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. B=3.0, A=4.0, C=2.0, C=2.0, B=3.0, A=4.0</li><li>2. <math>3+4+2+2+3+4=18</math></li><li>3. <math>18 / 6 = 3.0</math></li></ol> <p>3.0 is your GPA, which matches up with a B average.</p>		

# Avoiding Academic Problems ...

*Tips from Teachers for Academic Planning*

## ***Subject Area Tips for Your Freshman Year: Advice from Caring Teachers***

### **Science**

- Studying should be an on-going process. Do not cram. Study in numerous short sessions.
- Studying is an active process. Keep a pen or pencil in your hand at all times and use it. Make notes. Don't just look at your notes.
- Take good notes in class. Copy / study your notes later.
- Do your own work.
- Early test preparation will help alleviate test anxiety.
- Study as long as it takes to master the content.

### **Math**

- Do your homework every night. You will have daily homework — even weekend homework.
- Revisit all your notes before quizzes and tests
- Quizzes and tests are all cumulative. This means you have to remember everything from the beginning.
- Review your notes every night. Do not cram right before the test.
- If you don't understand a concept, seek help immediately!

### **Social Studies**

- Within reason, write down as much information as possible. Don't assume that you can remember it later.
- Don't worry about neatness when you write your notes. Copy the notes neatly so that they make sense to you later.
- Practice active reading skills. Make sure you understand what you read.
- Study your notes every night.
- When you don't understand a concept, ask!

### **English**

- Make flashcards of your vocabulary words.
- Prepare for and complete daily homework.
- You will be reading and writing A LOT!
- Keep up with your assignments.
- Stay organized.
- Learn test-taking strategies for the EOC.
- Have someone quiz you on grammar / vocabulary concepts. Figure out which study strategy works for you.

**student info ...**

**Cramming does not work!!** Studying a little everyday will bring more success than studying everything the night before the test. Plan ahead!

*The long-term answer to avoiding academic problems is planning ahead ...*

Use this worksheet to help plan out your course of study. Remember it is never bad to ensure that you will meet two different courses of study. While it is ultimately the student and parent’s responsibility to ensure that all courses necessary for graduation are met, everyone is encouraged to meet with their counselor early and often in the four years at Middle Creek to create a plan that works for you.

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PREP	COLLEGE TECH PREP	CAREER PREP
___ ENGLISH I	___ ENGLISH I	___ ENGLISH I
___ ENGLISH II	___ ENGLISH II	___ ENGLISH II
___ ENGLISH III	___ ENGLISH III	___ ENGLISH III
___ ENGLISH IV	___ ENGLISH IV	___ ENGLISH IV
___ ALGEBRA 1	___ ALGEBRA 1	___ ALGEBRA 1
___ GEOMETRY	___ TECH MATH I/GEOMETRY	_____
___ ALGEBRA 2	___ TECH MATH II/ALGEBRA 2	_____
(> ALG 2)	___ EARTH/ENVIRO SCIENCE	___ EARTH/ENVIRO SCIENCE
___ EARTH/ENVIRO SCIENCE	___ BIOLOGY	___ BIOLOGY
___ BIOLOGY	___ PHYS SCI/CHEM/PHYSICS	___ PHYS SCI/CHEM/PHYSICS
___ PHYS SCI/CHEM/PHYSICS	___ WORLD HISTORY	___ WORLD HISTORY
___ WORLD HISTORY	___ CIVICS & ECONOMICS	___ CIVICS & ECONOMICS
___ CIVICS & ECONOMICS	___ US HISTORY	___ US HISTORY
___ US HISTORY	___ HEALTHFUL LIVING	___ HEALTHFUL LIVING
___ 2ND LANG I	PATHWAY _____	PATHWAY _____
___ 2ND LANG II	_____	_____
___ HEALTHFUL LIVING	_____	_____
___ ELECTIVES (9)	_____	_____
_____	___ ELECTIVES (8)	___ ELECTIVES (8)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR NORTH CAROLINA SCHOLARS:  
(STUDENTS ENTERING 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE IN OR AFTER 2003/2004)**

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| ___ CHEMISTRY OR PHYSICS           | ___ ELECTIVES (SECOND-LEVEL OR ADV COURSES) |
| ___ CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION (1) | _____                                       |
| _____                              | _____                                       |
| ___ ARTS EDUCATION (1)             | ___ GPA: ≥3.5 (W) THRU 7 SEMESTERS          |
| _____                              |   |

# Making Good Choices ...

*Finding the Keys to Success As A High School Student*

## Most Common Freshman Mistakes

Pretending to be something that you are not and being the same as everyone else. ①

Not getting involved in student activities. ②

Missing a day and not making up work. ③

Being disorganized. ④

Missing deadlines. ⑤

Being impulsive. ⑥

Following the crowd. ⑦

Let peer pressure get you in trouble. ⑧

Fighting instead of working out your problems. ⑨

## What do you need to know to start high school?

- 1. Be in school every day.**  
When you miss school, you miss lecture, notes, class discussions, homework explanations, assignments, quizzes, and tests.
- 2. Take responsibility for your work.**  
If you are absent, remember that you are responsible for finding out what you missed and for making up work within the specified amount of time.
- 3. Be organized!**  
Have a separate notebook or folder for each class.
- 4. Use your agenda.**  
Each student will get a student agenda. Use this or some other assignment notebook to keep up with due dates, assignments, and phone numbers of classmates.
- 5. Create a study plan.**  
Manage your time well by creating a student plan that works for you and break large assignments down into smaller parts.
- 6. Be prepared.**  
Always come to class with the materials you need. Be there on time and focused on learning.
- 7. Be positive about what you can do.**  
Expect great things from yourself and your peers. Your attitude plays an important role in your education. If you believe you can succeed, you can!
- 8. Take ownership of your education.**  
Make your work relevant to you. Take personal responsibility for your learning by setting goals, evaluating your progress toward those goals, and adhere to high standards that you and others set for yourself.
- 9. Communicate with your teachers.**  
This means talking, listening, and participating in class. If you have questions, you need to find a way to ask whether it is during class, before or after class, or by email.
- 10. Be respectful and open to differences.**  
There will be many students who act and believe differently from you. Keep an open mind when learning about different cultures, traditions, and lifestyles.

## student info ...

Get ready for it ... high school brings **big change**. Even if you have done well in school so far, high school is a big transition. Realize that the decisions you are making now will dictate what options you have at your next transition in four years!

*The choices you make in the present will impact your future, and your vision for tomorrow will guide you in making the right choices today.*

***Life is about making choices!***

From the time you get up in the morning until the time you go back to bed in the evening, your day is a series of choices. Life may seem complicated at times, but in reality, it is nothing more than a series of choices. Each one of us makes hundreds of choices every single day. Some are good and some are not so good. Sometimes the difference between making a good choice and a bad choice is simply a matter of luck. Most of the time, however, making a good choice is a matter of having the proper information before you are in a position where you have to make that choice.

The best process to use when you are making an important decisions involves the following steps:

- **Step 1:** Name the choices or alternatives involved in your decision.
- **Step 2:** Gather information about the decision. Consider your personal values, your goals and the facts you need to know.
- **Step 3:** List the advantages and disadvantages of each choice.
- **Step 4:** Make your decision and list your reasons for this choice.

What if you make a poor decision?

- Admit it. Be honest and accountable.
- Accept the consequences.
- Do what you can to make up for your poor choice and turn it into something positive.
- Learn from your choice.
- Ask someone you trust to monitor your progress and give you support and encouragement.
- Make a personal commitment to make better choices in the future.

Understanding the “he said / she said” world of high school.

In their first year of high school, students face a multitude of obstacles to staying focused on school work. Help your student make positive decisions daily by talking regularly about classes, friends, social pressures, and whatever else they will share.

parent info

*Tips for Parents from How to Get the Most Out of High School by Linda O'Brien*

1. **Be interested in your student’s school experience.**
  - Attend all Open Houses and Parent-Teacher Conferences.
  - Know the dates of quizzes/tests, projects, exams, progress reports, report cards, and grading periods.
  - Ask questions if anything surprises you.
  - Don’t assume someone will call you if there is a problem.
  - Be proactive and call if you have a concern.
  - Attend extracurricular activities (games, plays, concerts, etc.) with your student.
  - Listen and find out what is going on in your student’s classes and in the hallways.
2. **Discuss your student’s classes and set goals.**
  - Set realistic academic goals.
  - Recognize effort and improvement with rewards, but let your student know that there will be consequences if they don’t do their part.
  - Discuss your expectations with your student.
  - Check your student’s school agenda (or assignment book) daily.
3. **Offer help to your student.**
  - Discuss with your student what is appropriate and inappropriate help.
  - Provide necessary materials and space that your student needs to complete assignments/projects and prepare for quizzes/tests at home.
  - Assist your student in managing their time by setting up a weekly after school schedule.
4. **Encourage your student to get involved in school.**
  - Students who are involved in school-related activities usually enjoy school more and have better grades.
  - Encourage your student to get involved in one or more activities, but always stress the importance of academics.
5. **Monitor your student’s activities and jobs.**
  - Make sure your student is not spending too much time on the phone, surfing the web, or working.
  - Allow time at home for students to focus on their school assignments every day.

# Get Connected ...

*Student Activities & Athletic Teams to Get Involved With*

**Research shows that students who participate in extracurricular events profoundly increase their academic scores. Simply put, students who feel “at home” or “connected” tend to be much more successful. While extracurricular activities, club-related or sports-related, may put your face in the yearbook a little bit more, they also will help you build your leadership, teamwork, and time management skills. In addition, those same skills will make a college application or scholarship form look a lot better!**

**Do not say “there’s nothing to do.”**

*You will find something, even if you’re not an athlete. From experience I would encourage everyone to join what appeals to them. Find what you like and stick to it. The benefits reaped from being involved in clubs and sports are great! Extracurriculars allow you not only to meet potential friends with similar interests, but to find what interests you. Most scholarships look for the all-around student who has participated in extracurricular activities. You will make connections with grown-ups who can write letters about what a wonderful leader or dedicated member you are.*

- MCHS Freshman from the Class of 2009

## **So where do you get started?**

1. Make a list of the things that interest you and find the contacts. Current information on clubs is available on the school’s website.
2. Most importantly, when you find something you like to do, stick with it. Be dedicated! Attend both meetings and other gatherings such as service events.
3. If you are interested and have time, try to excel in more than one area. For example, write for the newspaper and volunteer. But, make sure you are giving your all to each activity, and, most importantly, your school work.
4. Don’t worry about being the president or captain of the group. That will come in time. The key is that you’re doing something that is significant and important to you — center stage or behind the scenes.

## **Student Clubs at MCHS**

All students are invited to participate in student clubs and activities at Middle Creek. The list below gives you a little information about some of the clubs active at Middle Creek. For information on these and other clubs, see the school’s website or check out the postings in the Commons Area.

### *School Sponsored Clubs & Organizations*

- ACT I
- Animation Club
- Art Club
- Aspiring Chefs
- Brain Game Team
- Creative Arts Magazine
- Dance Team
- Digital Photography Club
- Drama Club
- French Club
- Future Teachers of America (FTA)
- Inter-Club Council
- International Club
- Key Club
- Music Interest Club (MIC)
- Mustang Science Club
- National Honor Society
- National Achievers Society
- National Honor Society
- Printz Club
- Quick Witz
- SAVE
- Spanish Club
- Speech & Debate
- Technology Club
- Youth in-Government

### *Student-Initiated Clubs & Organizations*

- Computer & Gaming Exploration (CAGE)
- Fashion & Design
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)
- Frisbee Golf Club
- Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)

## student info ...

**Not sure what your interests are or what you want to get involved in?** Freshman teachers have access to interest inventories that may help you consider what you want to get involved with as a club or as a possible career interest.

### ***Mustang Athletics***

Middle Creek High School offers a good athletic program where all students are encouraged to try out. Middle Creek is a member of the Tri-8 Conference. To be eligible to participate in any sport, a student must meet scholastic requirements, have parental consent, and have approval of a physician.

Our teams and MCHS have already earned an outstanding reputation by playing their games with a spirit of sportsmanship and fair play. All student athletes can feel especially honored that they have the major responsibility for continuing that spirit. In the same way, sportsmanship in the stands is as important as sportsmanship on the field. If you are found to be in gross violation of the ethics of competition or the principles of good sportsmanship, you may be barred from interscholastic contests.

Middle Creek's Athletics Program fields the following teams:

<b>Fall Sports</b>	<b>Winter Sports</b>	<b>Spring Sports</b>
Cheerleading *	Basketball – Men *	Baseball *
Cross Country	Basketball – Women *	Golf – Men
Football *	Gymnastics	Lacrosse – Men *
Golf – Women	Indoor Track	Lacrosse – Women
Soccer – Men *	Swimming	Soccer – Women *
Tennis – Women	Wrestling	Softball *
Volleyball		Tennis – Men
		Track

\* Indicates sports that field both a varsity and a junior varsity team.

### ***Ways for Parents to Get Involved***

Parents are critical to the success of any school community. You are encouraged to get involved at your school by contacting individual teachers or the PTSA. All parents who wish to volunteer must register with the online volunteer system. Volunteers can sign up with this system at any school in the Wake County School System.

There are three easy steps to do this:

- **STEP 1:** Parents who are new volunteers to Wake County must register at a Wake County school. All returning volunteers need to log into the system using the same login information as last year. Remember that you can only log in while at a Wake County school.
- **STEP 2:** Each volunteer should look at their personal data to verify there are no changes to their application or update application as needed.
- **STEP 3:** Click the SAVE button at the bottom of the data screen.

All volunteers need to log into the system to become active for the 2006-2007 school year before volunteering.

### ***What do I need to do once I arrive at school?***

To maintain safety and security, all visitors are expected to report to the Main Office before going anywhere else on campus. All visitors will receive and should wear the visitor's badge. If the visitor disrupts or interferes with the normal business of the school, the principal may place limitations on an individual's ability to visit the school.

### **Worried about your student becoming over-committed?**

This is something to watch out for, but do encourage your student to get involved in something at school or in the community.

Study after study has shown that students who are involved in clubs, sports, or other productive after school activities have higher GPAs and greater academic success. This is often attributed to the fact that these students are forced to develop their skills at time management and are forced to prioritize their activities.

parent info

### ***PTSA Involvement***

The Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) provides a variety of ways to get involved throughout the school year from volunteering within the school day to proctoring for state tests to organizing booster events and senior activities.

Also, great information is shared on a regular basis via the PTSA's email listserv. Join the listserv by going to the PTSA's website at <http://www.mcreekpsta.com/>.

# Common Topics of Interest

---

*Driver's Education, Work Permits, etc.*

## **Driver's Education** (<http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/driversed.htm>)

A huge source of excitement for all Freshmen and, maybe, a huge source of anxiety for parents, is Driver's Education. All Wake County high schools have a contract with Jordan Driving School (772-4877) to administer Drivers Education classes. Below are some common questions and answers, but check out the website listed above for more information including dates of classes, etc.

- **Where is the class offered?**  
Students sign up with Jordan Driving School but the class happens on Middle Creek's Campus.
- **When can the class be taken?**  
Student must be 14 1/2 when taking the class. Students can sign up for the class in the Guidance Office at Middle Creek. Because of the number of students who need the class, there is often a wait list to take the class. Please note that priority is given to older students seeking enrollment.
- **When is the class offered?**  
Driver' Education classes are offered after school for about three weeks and are also offered in the summer. Students are required to complete 30 hours of classroom instruction before driving.
- **How much time is specifically directed toward driving practice?**  
The driving portion requires a minimum of six hours of "behind the wheel" instruction. Students will be assigned times to drive based on age.
- **Are grades tied to the permit or Driver's License?**  
YES. Students are required to pass three out of four classes each semester and must be currently enrolled at school.

## **Youth Work Permit** (<http://middlecreekhs.wcpss.net/careers.htm>)

Part-time jobs can be rewarding to students and parents. To the students, a part-time job offers an income, a sense of independence and responsibility, and maybe insight into a possible future career. The parent's role in this process is to ensure that their student's academics do not suffer due to a time-consuming job. Therefore, it is important that you continue to help your student manage their after-school time and monitor their grades.

Here is some information that you need to know:

- Any North Carolina resident under the age of 18 who works for wages must have a Youth Work Permit on file with the employer. In the past, students have obtained work permits from the school. Now, they can complete these permits with the employer.
- The steps for getting a work permit are:
  1. First, the student must have a job.
  2. The employer logs onto the NC Department of Labor website and clicks on the "Your Work Permit" button from the Quick Clicks Menu.
  3. After reading the instructions, complete the YECAUTO certificate.
  4. On the application page, the employee and employer complete the required information such as type of business and job responsibilities.
  5. At this point, the application can be submitted and the certificate printed. The permit will be printed with an effective date and a Certificate Number.

For questions about work permits, job and internship opportunities, and business partners who regularly work with Middle Creek students, contact Dr. Betty Jo Wimmer, Career Development Counselor, at [bwimmer@wcpss.net](mailto:bwimmer@wcpss.net) or 773-3838.