

INCOMING SIXTH GRADE

PARENT ORIENTATION

RYERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

TUESDAY, June 8, 2010

7:15 PM

WELCOME

MR. PAUL SCUTTI, PRINCIPAL

MRS. MEREDITH NICHOLLS, VICE PRINCIPAL

MS. JAMIE NICHOLLS, GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

RYERSON P. T. O. REPRESENTATIVES

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

M. J. RYERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL JUNE 2010 INCOMING SIXTH GRADE PARENT ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Welcome! We would like to make your child's transition to our school as pleasant and comfortable as possible. While there are probably hundreds of questions that incoming students have, we hope the answers to these most often asked questions will make you and your child feel more at ease and familiar with our school.

1. What time does school start and end?

Homeroom begins at 7:50 AM and dismissal is at 2:22 PM.

2. How many classes are there in a day?

There are nine periods in a day. Five academic classes for the four marking periods. Related Arts classes meet on a trimester basis: (physical education, health, art, computers, and music) Additional offerings of Flex, Creative Math and Character Education is also scheduled on a trimester basis. And finally LUNCH!

3. Do we get to choose our related arts courses?

No. Everyone must take music, art, physical education, health and computer applications.

4. Do we have recess or go outside?

When the weather is nice, you will go outside for 20 minutes during lunch.

5. How much time is there between classes?

Two minutes. You will get into a routine of how to get to your classes; most of them are very close together.

6. Do we have lockers and locks?

You will have a corridor locker. You will be given your combination at the beginning of the school year. To ensure privacy and the safe keeping of your belongings, do not share your locker combination.

7. What happens if you are late for class?

You must have a pass from another teacher. Tardiness to a class may result in a consequence assigned by the teacher. However, the first week of school your teachers will understand that it takes time to find your way and learn how to use your locker.

8. How many teachers will we have?

You will have one for each subject—Social Studies, Language Arts, Literature, FLEX (6th Grade Only) Math, Science, Physical Education, Health, Art, Music and Computers.

9. Are the teachers nice?

Sure they are, but they all have different personalities. You will get to know each other as the year progresses and you become more comfortable with them.

10. How long are the classes?

Usually 39 minutes.

11. When do I get my schedule?

Schedules are mailed home prior to the first day of school, usually mid to late August.

12. Are the classes easy or hard?

The classes are appropriate for sixth graders. Some are more difficult than others depending on the subject, but all your teachers want you to succeed and are willing to help you whenever you need help.

13. Do we get a lot of homework at night?

Expect some homework each night. The amount depends on each class and what unit you are studying. You should average about one hour and fifteen minutes each night.

14. What happens if I get lost or have questions when I get to Ryerson?

Teachers, counselors and administrators are in the hallways. Ask an older student. You will learn your way around in just a few days.

15. Do we have to wear gym suits?

No, but you must bring a change of clothes for physical education like a tee shirt and shorts or sweats. Sneakers are required, and please no pajama bottoms.

16. Do you take a shower after physical education? No.

17. Is there a dress code in the school?

Yes. Some things are not allowed, like hats, tank tops, bare midriffs, backless shoes, torn or see-through clothing or tee shirts with inappropriate language or designs. Radio/cassette, CD players, i-Pods, electronic games, and **cell phones** are not permitted in school. Candy and gum, too!

18. Are there hall monitors between classes?

No. Teachers and administrators are in the hall between classes.

19. Do 7th and 8th graders bother 6th graders?

This has not been a problem here. If anyone is bothering you, let your teacher, counselor, Vice-Principal or Principal know right away.

20. Are there a lot of strict rules to know?

According to our present 6th graders, the rules are not very different from elementary school. Most of them are explained in your planner and will be reviewed at the beginning of the school year.

21. Where do we keep our band instruments?

There are storage areas in the music room where instruments are stored.

22. Are the lunches any good?

You can always find something you like, there is a monthly menu distributed for your convenience. Hot lunches, sandwiches and a salad bar are available every day, as well as snacks and beverages.

23. Can I go home with a friend on his/her bus?

No. Students are prohibited from riding any bus other than their assigned bus. If a child will be picked up from school early, a note must be sent in with the student stating so. If you are a bus student you must have written parent permission to walk home.

24. What extra-curricular activities are there?

We have Student Council, Yearbook, a School Newspaper, Drama Production, Band, and Chorus. Boys and girls basketball teams are for 7th and 8th grade. Watch for notices and listen for announcements in homeroom and join activities at the beginning of the year.

25. Can I go to the nurse at any time?

Ask your teacher for a pass. Sometimes the nurse will send you a pass if she needs to see you for a routine visit.

26. What do I have to do if I'm absent?

Have one of your parents call the school attendance line, (973) 962-9539, in the morning before 7:45 AM. If your parents do not call in your absence, you will need to bring a signed note from one of your parents when you return and give it to your homeroom teacher.

27. Can I carry my backpack with me during school?

To address the issue of backpacks during the school day, we have decided that students will place backpacks in their lockers before homeroom. They will carry books and materials during the day, visiting lockers on a predetermined schedule. Books and materials needed for homework will be placed in backpacks before leaving at the end of the school day.

**M. J. RYERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL
TYPICAL 6TH GRADE ACADEMIC SCHEDULE**

Period	2010- 2011
	Homeroom
1	Academic
2	Academic or Flex Cycle
3	Academic
4	Related Arts
5	Lunch
6	Academic
7	Academic
8	Related Arts
9	Academic or Flex Cycle

Sample Schedule

Your child's homeroom is their first period class, unless otherwise noted.
Lunch is noted as the "MISSING" period in this case #5.

FY = Full Year

T1 = Trimester 1 - September to December 5th

T2 = Trimester 2 - December 8th to March 18th

T3 = Trimester 3 - March 19th to June 19th

S1 = Semester 1 is the 1st and 2nd marking periods

S2 = Semester 2 is the 3rd and 4th marking periods

MIDDLE LEVEL PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The middle level program provides a setting for learning specifically designed to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of the 11 to 15 year old child. It provides a gradual transition between life in elementary school and high school, but is a unique experience apart from both.

The middle level program places high priority on the following goals:

1. Exploration
2. Individualization
3. Acquisition of the basic skills and knowledge
4. Learning how to learn
5. Transition
6. Development of a positive self-concept

To achieve these goals, the middle level program aims to incorporate the following program components:

1. Learning communities
2. Interdisciplinary team-teaching
3. Flexible scheduling and grouping
4. Teacher advisory system
5. Wide range of exploratory activities
6. Increased teacher and student decision-making
7. Community service

The middle level program provides an increased opportunity for the student to learn about themselves and those around them. The instructional mode emphasizes the process of learning as well as the content. It is student-centered rather than teacher-centered. The major theme is *learning how to learn*. The middle level program should not only be effective and productive, but should also be an attractive and pleasant part of the ***In between Ager's life***.

Characteristics of an Effective Middle Level Education

1. Clearly articulated goals, supported by all involved.
2. A balanced curriculum, responsive to the needs of adolescents.
3. Varied modes of teaching emphasizing concept development and achievement motivation.
4. A balanced and diversified activities program.
5. A strong student-centered guidance program.
6. An organic organizational structure featuring smaller “**learning communities**” and team teaching.
7. A school climate with strong academic emphasis.
8. Supportive community relationships.
9. On-going evaluation of all programs.
10. Systematic staff development.
11. A strong leadership team.

Needs of the Adolescent

Some of the more specific needs of the 10-15 year old:

1. Understanding physical and emotional changes, which occur during puberty. These are very personal and frequently troublesome matters. The child needs help in understanding himself/herself during this period of change and understanding the idea that it is healthy to grow and evolve.
2. Self-acceptance. Resolving the conflict between what he/she is and what he/she wishes they were. Beginning to establish life goals and making reasonable plans to attain them.
3. Acceptance of and by others. Developing acceptable relationships with peers of both sexes. Making friends. Getting to know others and understanding their differences. Realizing how he/she affects others and how they want to affect others. Understanding the dynamics of peer pressure.
4. Acceptance, understanding, approval and love from significant adults.
5. Learning responsibility to others. Not completely self-centered. Learning self-control.
6. Independence. Learning to make decisions, assumes responsibility, use independent judgment, recognize and take the consequence of his/her actions.
7. Learning to deal with feelings. Becoming aware that others experience similar feelings.
8. Developing a personal value system.

*Dr. George P. White
Lehigh University*

Characteristics of Emerging Adolescents

Physical Development

1. Accelerated physical development begins.
 - Girls and Boys are growing at varying rates of speed.
 - Bone growth is faster than muscle development.
 - Different parts of the body grow at different rates.
 - Bones may lack protection of covering muscles and supporting tendons.
2. Students show ravenous appetites and peculiar tastes, may over tax the digestive system with large quantities of improper foods. Developmental diabetes may occur.
3. Basal metabolism may fluctuate over a short period of time, resulting in extremely restless behavior at times and extremely listless behavior at other times. These changes tend to be a result of body chemistry.
4. Most girls have entered the pubescent stage of development with secondary sex characteristics continuing to develop, including the enlargement of the breasts and the onset of menstruation. Boys are typically at the pre-pubescent stage of development.
5. There are marked individual differences in physical development among and between boys and girls.

Social/Emotional Development

1. Affiliation base broadens from family to peer group. Not a rejection of parents.
2. These are the “Puppy love years” – shows extreme devotion to a particular boy or girl friend, but may transfer allegiance to a new friend overnight.
3. A strong belief that the will of the group must prevail.
4. Strong concern for what is right and for social justice. High level of concern for the less fortunate.
5. Is influenced by adults—attempts to identify with adults other than their parents.
6. Despite a trend toward heterosexual interests, same-sex affiliation tends to dominate.
7. Strong desire for direction and regulation, but reserves the right to question or reject suggestions of adults.
8. Is easily offended and sensitive to criticism of personal shortcomings.
9. A tendency to exaggerate simple occurrences and believe that problems are unique.

Intellectual Development

1. Exhibit a wide range of skills and abilities unique to their developmental patterns.
2. Intellectual development ranges from the concrete-manipulatory stage to the ability to deal with abstract concepts.
3. Attention spans are short, but can be expanded.
4. Intensely curious and growing in mental ability.
5. Prefer active over passive learning activities.
6. Prefer interaction with peers during learning activities.
7. Relevance of learning is of great importance. “How will this help me in real life?”

Dr. George P. White, Lehigh University

6th Grade Co-Curricular Activities

Chorale and Band – These groups are comprised of students interested in pursuing their musical talents on an individual or group basis. Students requesting membership in the band or the chorale understand that it requires a year long commitment to the music instructor and to the group.

Student Council – Elected student representatives promote general activities within the school.

Yearbook – Students assist in the development and organization of a yearbook under faculty direction.

RyerSun Newspaper – Martin J. Ryerson School's student newspaper is published several times during the school year.

Mind and Spirit – Our literary magazine is comprised of written works created by our students.

T.R.U.S.T. – Peer Mediation/Peer Leadership.

Across the Ages – Peer Mentoring Program for identified 6th graders.

School Dances

Other Special Events

The Guidance Office is the place to go . . .

...if you need to talk about personal problems that can affect your performance and attitude in school.

...for help in making academic and peer relationship decisions.

...to confer about academic issues.

...to learn about study skills.

...for help with high school course selection.

...if you need an adult friend in school.

...to help you get the most out of school.

...to just talk with an adult.

Ms. Nicholls is our Guidance Counselor.