

Welcome to Woodmere Middle School! We know the transition to a new school can be stressful for both students and parents. In order to help alleviate concerns, we've tried to provide you with useful information and to answer commonly asked questions about our school. We hope you find this information helpful and that you are already beginning to feel like part of our Woodmere Middle School family. We look forward to getting to know you and your child over the upcoming years!

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PPS Staff

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Mathematics  
Phys. Ed. & Health  
Science  
Social Studies  
Special Education  
World Languages/ENL

## **The Woodmere Middle School Shared Vision**

The Woodmere Middle School faculty is committed to maintaining a caring and nurturing environment where everyone feels supported in their intellectual, social and emotional growth. We celebrate diversity, wellness and individuality and strive to maximize the unique potential of every student as we prepare them to be lifelong learners. Through the use of purposeful instructional strategies, a variety of course offerings and hands-on activities, we empower students to become active learners who are creative problem solvers and independent thinkers. We embrace our partnership with the school community as we help students develop into respectful and responsible global citizens.

## CLASSES

- What is a team?

Teachers and students are grouped into teams that share interdisciplinary units and projects in an integrated approach to the curriculum. In the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students on a given team share common teachers in Math, Science, ELA, Social Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies.

- Will my child have any classes with students not on his/her team?

Yes. Students are grouped across the grade for exploratory classes and lunch/recess.

- What are exploratory classes?

Exploratory classes include physical education, health, general and performing music, art, home & careers, technology and various academic supports. Some exploratories, such as physical education and performing music classes meet all year, while others meet for one semester.

- Can my child select his/her exploratory classes?

Not usually, due to academic needs, course availability, enrollment constraints and specific requirements. The exception to this is performing music (band, chorus, orchestra) which a student can choose to take.

Our goal is, to the extent possible, give every child an experience in every exploratory we offer during their time at WMS.

- When do children take a World Language?

Students begin the study of French, Spanish or Chinese in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

- What is an accelerated class?

An accelerated class is taken a year or more in advance of the time students across the state generally take the class.

Accelerated classes generally don't begin until a student is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Some examples of accelerated classes that can be taken at WMS are Algebra, Earth Science and Studio in Art. Students who successfully complete these classes, usually including a state exam, acquire one high school credit.

- Is extra help available?

Yes, your child's teachers are available every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 – 9:05 a.m. for extra help. Students do not need to sign up in advance to attend extra help.

- What is the homework club?

Homework club is a drop-in program available to all students. Homework club is an opportunity for your child to either get assistance with their homework or just begin homework at the end of the school day. Homework club takes place in the WMS Library, every Monday and Wednesday from 3:25-4:00 p.m. Two teachers are available at this time as a resource for the students.

## SCHOOL ROUTINES

- Where do children go when they arrive to school?

Unless there is inclement weather, students congregate in either the courtyard on the northeast side of the building or the blacktop adjacent to the basketball courts at the rear of the building.

When there is inclement weather, students are brought into the auditorium and cafeteria beginning at 8:30 a.m.

- What time should my child arrive at school?

Supervision of students begins at 8:30 a.m. Students should arrive no later than 9:05 in order to have time to go to their locker and arrive at homeroom.

- What time is dismissal?

Students are dismissed at 3:10 p.m.

- Can students walk home?

Yes, students can walk home from school.

- Where do 6<sup>th</sup> graders go on the first day of school?

6<sup>th</sup> graders will be brought into the auditorium from the busses and the courtyard prior to the start of school. Once all students are present, they will be welcomed, introduced to school personnel, procedural information will be provided, questions will be answered and they will be dismissed by class with their homeroom/1<sup>st</sup> period teachers.

During the first few periods of the day, teachers will review procedures with the students, tour the school, distribute and practice locks, assign lockers, etc.

- How do I know what supplies to buy my child?

Basic supply lists for the entire grade will be posted on the school website early in the summer. Please keep in mind that some subject or teacher specific supply requests may be sent home during the first few days of school.

- Does my child need all of his/her school supplies on the first day?

No, although many students are more comfortable bringing all their supplies on the first day. Teachers do not expect students to have all of their supplies immediately. At a minimum, students should have a notebook and something to write with on the first day of school.

- What is homeroom?

The beginning of first period is designated as each student's homeroom. During homeroom, students recite the Pledge of Allegiance and listen to announcements.

- Do students need to bring all of their books home each night?

No. Many textbooks can be left at home or in school depending on what unit the teacher is working on. Teachers will let the students know what textbooks and supplies are needed for class.

- When do students go to their lockers?

Students generally go to their lockers at the beginning of the day, before lunch/recess, after lunch/recess and at the end of the day. They leave their backpack in their locker and carry whatever books they will need to class. Teachers will review student locker procedures and organization numerous times early in the school year.

- When will my child receive his/her lock?

Students receive their hallway locks and locker assignments during homeroom on the first day of school.

- Will my child be issued a lock for gym?

Yes, the Physical Education teachers issue each student a lock and locker assignment.

- Does my child need to change clothes for Phys. Ed.?

Students need to dress appropriately for PE (shorts or sweats and sneakers). Students can either change clothes in the locker room or wear these clothes to school on PE days.

- How will my child learn to use a combination lock?

Teachers spend a significant amount of time instructing students on how to use a combination lock the first day of school. Students can always ask an adult for assistance if they are having difficulty.

- Can students leave the building for lunch?

No, students eat lunch in the cafeteria.

- My child has money in his/her account from elementary school, will it follow him/her to WMS?

Yes, a student's balance whether negative or positive will follow him/her to every school but the balance should be \$0.00 before he/she graduates.

- Are pre-payments made the same way as in elementary school?

Yes, either send in a check or pay online using your child's ID#.

- Elementary schools only serve lunch, is breakfast available at WMS?

Yes, breakfast is served each day from 8:30am – 8:50am, all are welcome.

- My child is eligible for free lunch, is he also eligible for free breakfast?

Yes, but please remember new applications are due by the end of September.

- Are cell phones and/or smart watches allowed in school?

Students are not allowed to access cell phones, smart watches or other electronic communication devices during the school day. We understand that parents often want their child to have these items available after school. To this end, students may keep these items, turned off, in their lockers until the end of the day. These items should be put away prior to the student entering the building in the morning. A telephone is available in the school office for student use during the school day.

- Can students ride bicycles to school?

Students can ride bicycles to school and should lock them to one of the three available bicycle racks. Bicycles must be walked once on school property. Under NYS law, children 13 years of age and under must wear protective helmets.

- Can the outside of my child's locker be decorated for his/her birthday?

No, we do not allow the decorating of the outside of lockers. Student birthdays are included in the morning announcements. Additionally, a calendar of birthdays is posted outside the cafeteria on a monthly basis.

- Can I have food delivered to my child at lunchtime?

No, we do not accept food deliveries for children.

- Will my child be using a Chromebook in middle school?

Yes, all students, grades 6-8, utilize a Chromebook in Woodmere Middle School. Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will use the Chromebook they were provided in elementary school. Passwords may need to be changed before the first day of school. Terms of use will be the same as they were in elementary school. Further information will be provided over the summer.

## COMMUNICATION

- How do learn about upcoming events, important dates, etc.?

The best source of information is usually the building website. In addition, the school administration often sends out information to the parent email addresses that we have on file.

- What if I need to speak with my child's teachers?

Teachers appreciate parents sharing any concerns that may come up throughout the year. The best ways to contact a teacher are (1) call the office and leave a message or (2) email the teacher. You will receive a return call or email in a timely manner.

- What if I want to meet with my child's teachers?

There are two days and one evening devoted to parent conferences during the year. If parents have pressing concerns they can request a meeting with their child's team. A team meeting is a group conference, arranged through the guidance counselor, which includes all of the child's core teachers, the counselor and other members of the staff as appropriate.

- How do I sign up for parent/teacher meetings on conference day/evening?

Parents sign up for conferences electronically through the "Teacher Reacher" system. Information and instructions for accessing this system are distributed in advance of parent teacher conference days/evening.

- How can I meet with my child's guidance counselor?

Please call the PPS secretary to schedule an appointment.

- What should I do if my child is absent?

Please call 792-4300 and select option #1 if your child will be absent. Children must bring in an absence note to Ms. Tantillo in the main office when they return to school. Students can check their homework via the website or call a homework buddy. For lengthy absences, please call the office so that teachers may leave work to be picked up.

- Who can I see if I have questions regarding curriculum or instruction?

The first call to make is always the classroom teacher. Most concerns are dealt with easily this way. If necessary, a parent can follow up with the subject chairperson or director.

- How often do progress reports and report cards come out?

Students receive four progress reports and four report cards. Progress reports and report cards are not mailed home but are posted on the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Parents should consult the district calendar for specific dates that progress reports and report cards are posted.

- Is there a school website?

Yes, please log on to the district website, [www.hewlett-woodmere.net](http://www.hewlett-woodmere.net) and follow the link to the Woodmere Middle School.

- How is important school news communicated to parents?

School information is distributed in a variety of ways. Parents are encouraged to check the website regularly for announcements, upcoming events and school news. In addition, we utilize email, paper flyers and the all-call system depending on the specific information to be disseminated.

### GRADES, SCHEDULING, ETC.

- How can I check my child's grades and homework assignments?

Each teacher's gradebook is public and may be accessed through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Instructions for accessing the portal are provided on the School District website. Parents should go to the website and click on the "Parent Portal" tab under "Find it Fast".

While homework assignments are posted, we recommend that each student have a "homework buddy" that they can call as a backup to homework online.

- Do middle school grades become part of my child's permanent transcript?

Only grades in credit bearing classes, such as Algebra, Earth Science and World Language, become part of a child's transcript.

- Is there a Community Service program at WMS?

Yes, we believe community service is an integral part of a child's overall educational experience. For more information on this program, please visit the WMS website and click on the "Community Service" tab under "Find it Fast".

- How many periods are in the day?

There are eight, forty-minute periods in the school day. The lunch/recess period is divided into two, twenty-minute halves.

- Can students participate in more than one performing music class?

Yes, this generally requires taking a music “lab” class which meets during recess.

- What are blue days and white days?

Most exploratory classes meet every other day. In order to help students remember their schedules, we refer to the alternating days as blue or white days. In a given week, for example, if Monday is a blue day, Tuesday will be a white day, Wednesday will be a blue day and so on...

- Do all the grades eat at the same time?

No, each grade level has its own lunch/recess period. Half the grade eats the first half of the period and has recess the second half of the period. The other half of the grade follows the opposite schedule.

- Can my child change his or her lunch period?

Each grade eats during a specific period. Occasionally, students want to change between lunch/recess and recess/lunch. Such a request must be made through the guidance counselor and can only be accommodated as space allows.