

Middle School

Administration:
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Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope you had a wonderful summer and are ready to begin another school year! I look forward to working with you and your children to establish a learning community where all students are challenged and learning is a rewarding experience. We have had a busy summer getting ready for the new school year. Our math and English teachers spent time developing a new District curriculum that is aligned with the national CORE Standards. This is the first step, in a five year process, of writing and implementing a District curriculum for every subject. These curricula will include ensured learning activities, common assessments and pacing guides. The District curriculum process is the result of the curriculum audit that was conducted last year. You can find information on the District website! (www.wrsdsau59.org).

This year, we will continue with the 80-minute daily blocks for math and English Language Arts/Reading. In seventh and eighth grade, social studies and science will continue to meet for 80 minutes every other day, while sixth grade will have a daily social studies block one semester and a daily science block the other semester. We are focusing on supporting transitions for our students and we feel that having one of these subjects at a time will enable incoming sixth graders to more easily manage the demands of middle school. Unified arts will also continue to have 80-minute blocks this year. Each class will meet on a 29-30-day rotation and general music classes will still alternate with guidance class. We are excited to be able to have Kirk Young, the high school Choral Director, co-direct chorus with Mr. Jones this year. In another effort to support student transitions, we will have high school guidance counselors teach a transition guidance class out of music for our eighth grade students. We will be building in some recess time for students during the AL block this year, in response to student surveys and a focus on wellness. Friday enrichment was a great success last year and we plan to continue with that again this year. We'll be reviewing schedules with students on the first day of school and we'll help them navigate through the various daily, weekly and semester rotations. Within a few weeks, the students usually know the schedule better than the adults!

The first day of school is Monday, August 29th. Students will report to homerooms by 7:42 A.M. and will be dismissed at 2:22 P.M. Homeroom lists will be posted on the outside doors on Wednesday, August 24th - the homeroom is Tuesday's Block B class. The bus routes will be published in the "Winnisquam Echo" and on our website www.wrsdsau59.org (click on WRMS to link to our website). Students who do not arrive by bus should not plan to arrive before 7:25 A.M. when the cafeteria opens for breakfast and there is supervision on the playground. Staff supervision on the playground does not begin until 7:20

A.M. when the first bus arrives. Please note that we have a one-way traffic pattern around the school. Parents dropping off students should enter from Winter Street and continue around the building to the drop off area, which is at the stop sign, then turn right to exit onto Main Street. Except in the case of wet or extremely cold mornings, all students should report directly to the playground upon their arrival.

Breakfast and hot lunch will be available on the first day of school. The price of a student hot lunch is \$2.30 and breakfast is \$1.00. Forms for free and reduced hot lunch will be sent home on the first day of school. If your student received free or reduced lunch at the end of the last school year, he or she will automatically receive the same benefit for a limited time; however, you must reapply for this program again as soon as possible. You can access your child's lunch account online - go to our website and click on the Services tab and then click on MyNutrikids.com - there is a user's guide if you are using this for the first time. You will need your child's ID number, located on his/her schedule, to do this.

Our Open House is scheduled for Thursday, September 15th from 6:00 - 8:00 P.M. Our PTO will be holding a pizza dinner in the cafeteria starting at 5:00. It is very important to establish a connection with your child's teachers and I encourage you to plan to attend the Open House. Our staff is committed to establishing good communication with parents and the opportunity to meet you and provide you with an overview of their learning expectations for your child will help to get this process started.

This year, we will provide you with more options for communication via e-mail. Our goal is to send daily notices through your e-mail, in addition to our monthly newsletters. Also, please mark your calendars for school pictures on September 15th. I have contacted team leaders and am enclosing recommended school supply lists and I will post this on our website. Some teachers may contact you directly if they are requesting certain supplies for their class.

We are still under restructuring status, as we did not make AYP last year. As a school identified for restructuring, we will continue to be in full implementation of our Restructuring Plan, which provides us with the opportunity and resources to make improvements to our programs. It is not unusual for assessment scores to take a dip as new programs are implemented. I anticipate that all our hard work will be evident in our scores as we move forward. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. I look forward to working with you this year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Pamela A. Miller, Principal