

Middle school is a highly critical period in your child's life. Many of our students understand this and are *very* serious about school and schoolwork. Please understand, **ALL HIGH SCHOOLS REQUIRE GRADES, BEHAVIOR AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS FROM 6th, 7th and 8th grade.** In addition to this, personal recommendations must also be provided with each application. I want each and every student in our school to have *every* opportunity available to them. High school opens the door for college or the work force. Coming from the Golden Door is the first step in the right direction. Many high schools in the area actively recruit our students based on the reputation of our school. I know as a parent of a middle school child, you share in my concern for their future. Despite our **best** efforts, we continue to struggle with **many** of our students and parents. The middle school staff will continue to work **tirelessly** to ensure that your child receives the very best education has to offer. I, along with the school administration, am committed to doing whatever it takes to make sure this happens successfully.

Take a few moments to read this and discuss with your child. Please ask yourself and your child the following questions:

- “Where do I want my child to go to high school?”
- “What will I do to make sure my child works as hard as possible to make sure this happens?”

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- **Arrival/dismissal:** Our day begins promptly at 8:00am. Please make sure your child arrives **before** that time. They need enough time to eat and go to their lockers. Students must be in their classroom before 8:00am. Any middle school student entering the building at, or after 8:00am will be considered late. If your child is chronically late, you will be required to come in for a meeting with an administrator. If the problem continues, the issue will be brought up to the School's Board of Trustees for further action. Please note: Any student arriving to school after 9:00am **will not** be allowed to go to class without a note or phone call from the parent explaining why the child was late. Tardiness is the main problem we have in the middle school. Please make sure you speak to your child regarding the utmost importance of being on time. Any student that is chronically late, will be excluded from receiving honor roll.
- **Lockers:** Having lockers is a privilege that must be earned. Hallway behavior needs to be established before the responsibility of a locker is given. Please note, if it is determined that your child abuses his/her locker privileges; those privileges will be revoked for a period of time. Please ensure that your child has a lock, memorizes the combination by the end of August. Your child **SHOULD NOT** give out the combination under any circumstances. Should a problem arise, your child's homeroom teacher will have the locker combination. If the lock is lost or broken, it must be replaced immediately.
- **Gold Pins:** During the first week of school, your child will come home with a folder full of information regarding our Middle School behavior model. Please review this information carefully before signing. Students will receive their gold pin as soon as I receive the signed documents. All privileges revolve around what “level” your child is on.
- **School Supplies: Please see supply list.** In order to be successful, all students must have their supplies on the first day of school. A daily grade is given to students based on this. Students should be prepared for every class beginning Day one.
- **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices:** Cell phones, MP3 players, PSP players etc. are **strictly prohibited** from school. We strongly discourage all students from bringing in these items. The School assumes **no** responsibility for lost or stolen items. No exceptions. If a staff member notices a student with a cell phone, the phone will be confiscated. Please refer to the Board approved cell phone use policy.
- **Lunch/Lunch cards:** Please make sure your child has a paid lunch card *or* a nutritious lunch. Students will not be allowed to purchase vending machine snack for lunch.

- ❑ **D.E.A.R.: Drop everything and read:** Is scheduled every Friday from 12:15pm-12:45 for all middle school students. Please make sure your child comes to school with a book to read during this time. Periodically, we will implement an unscheduled DEAR time. The students will need to be prepared. Reading is the foundation for success and we take this initiative quite seriously. All DEAR books will be left in class.
- ❑ **Computer Use:** We urge you to closely monitor your child's computer use. There are several sites that our students are visiting that are extremely dangerous. Our students are posting pictures of themselves, giving out personal information and meeting people online on a daily basis. One of these websites is "myspace.com". If your child has an account, please ask to see it and review in detail. Students who abuse their computer privilege will not be allowed to use school computers. Any student that is observed visiting an unapproved website during computer class will receive a zero for that class period.
- ❑ **Misbehavior during class time:** Our staff works very hard to ensure that your child is receiving an education that is detailed, well thought out and engaging. Any student that is chronically disruptive during class time will be asked to leave. **Please note, if a student is asked to leave the class, the student's grade will automatically be a zero for that day.**

Below I have listed some **issues** we deal with *everyday* as a middle school. Again, please discuss with your child.

❑ **Quality and consistency of homework**

Ask your child every day what they have for homework. A planner has been purchased for every student. Your child's teacher will check it each day. This will be part of their academic grade. If lost, the cost to purchase a replacement is \$5.00. All Assignments should be written down every night in their planner. Please ask to see the written assignment. Please check and initial every night. **Never** accept "I don't have homework". **That is simply not true.** When in doubt, CALL OR E-MAIL THE TEACHER. If your child sees you make the effort, they will think twice about missing assignments. **Missing homework is not acceptable. Please sign and initial your child's planner each night.** All important school information will be posted in the planner. **BOOKBAGS SHOULD BE TAKEN HOME EVERY DAY.**

- ❑ **School's uniform policy:** Many of our students take a great deal of pride in how they look when they come to school each morning. Students who are not in uniform WILL NOT be allowed to attend classes. The school uniform for middle school students is as follows:

- **Girls:** Girls may wear khaki long pants, knee-length skirts, skorts, or jumpers. Pants that are too tight will be considered unacceptable and will not be allowed during this school year. Girls will wear a blue uniform polo shirt with the school logo. ***Shirts must be tucked in at all times.*** If worn, sweaters **must** be navy blue.
- **Boys:** Boys must wear khaki pants that fit them at their waist. A belt is part of the school uniform and is required to be worn at all times. Navy blue uniform polo shirts with the school logo are also required to be worn. ***Shirts must be tucked in at all times.*** T-shirts are not part of the school uniform.
- **Shoes/Sneakers:** Only all- **black** footwear will be allowed. No exceptions.

GYM UNIFORMS AND ALL- BLACK SNEAKERS ARE ONLY TO BE WORN ON GYM DAYS!

By adhering to a strict uniform policy, we are attempting to instill in the students that they represent their families and school when they are in public. **We strive for excellence and they need to look the part!**

Please note, our middle school students are the worst offenders of violating the school uniform policy. For example, the boys come to school with pants that are two and three sizes too big and this causes their pants to fall around their backside. They do not wear belts and their shirts are almost never tucked

in. Our students come to school wearing different colored shirts under their school shirts. None of the above mentioned is acceptable. Please remember: **ALL students will be required to wear PLAIN BLACK shoes or sneakers.** If your child comes to school out of uniform, they will be given one warning. The second time, they will be issued a loan from the uniform bank at the school. If your child comes to school out of uniform, they will not be allowed to go to class until a parent brings them the correct uniform. Please us enforce this policy.

□ **The manner in which middle school students deal with adults in the building:** Disrespect, Insubordination and defiance have no place in our building. Fortunately, the blatant “in your face” behavior does not exist here at the Golden Door. I urge you to speak to your child about their behavior and attitude when dealing with staff members. Unnecessary “drama” in class takes up entirely too much educational time. Remind your child that insubordination/defiance/disrespect are considered “non-negotiables” and will be dealt with severely. The following procedures are still in place. When given a directive, the students is expected to:

- **Acknowledge the person**
- **Complete the task immediately**

All this should be done without attitude!

The students also know that they are always given the opportunity to politely disagree. The procedure is:

- **“Shut down”**
- **Address the issue with the teacher after class, at recess or after school**
- **If this doesn't work, see Mrs. Lopez**

We know that you do not accept your child displaying a poor attitude toward you. The standards you set forth at home should carry over to school each and every day. If there is an issue that may affect your child's behavior in school, I urge you to call me so that we may be aware of potential problems and offer assistance. **Please keep in mind that if your child displays a poor attitude, it is our responsibility to correct your child and discipline him/her accordingly.** Please support us in this. There are many schools that will accept disrespect and defiance. The Golden Door is *not* one of those schools. If you have concerns regarding this issue, I urge you to come in and address them before the school year begins. Please refer to the School's Board -approved conduct policy.

- **Inappropriate touching:** Please speak to your child about the potential dangers of inappropriate touching. Boys and girls putting their hands on each other for **any reason** are not acceptable. The excuse “we were just playing...” will not be tolerated. The reality is that these types of hand games usually lead to bigger issues that include sexual advances and fights. Please remind your child to keep their hands to themselves at all times.
- **Bullying:** As per state guidelines mandated by Gov. McGreevey as of September 1st, 2003, every school in New Jersey must have anti-bullying procedures in place. Bullying at the Golden Door will not be tolerated. Please speak to your child about the dangers and consequences of bullying. If you feel your child is being bullied in any way, PLEASE let me know. We need to be aware of any type of situation in order to correct it. Please help us make sure the Golden Door is a “Bully-Free Zone”. Attached, you will find our Bullying policy.
- **Behavior on public transportation:** This is a major problem!!!! Please speak to your child regarding appropriate behavior on public transportation. During the last school year, the bus company videotaped our kids on one of their buses. The documentation of extreme misbehavior was crystal clear and appalling! They have informed me that they will continue to videotape the behavior and press formal charges against all students that participate in disruptive behavior.
- **High School Applications:** All high schools require our school to forward all academic, attendance and behavior records from the 6th, 7th and 8th grades. Our students are given

one chance to prove themselves to the school they would like to attend. Every decision counts!! I will be meeting with our 8th graders during the first week of school to begin the application process.

I look forward to a wonderful journey filled with exciting experiences and opportunities. I need your help in that journey. **BE INVOLVED, COME TO MEETINGS, CALL THE SCHOOL, STOP BY FOR VISITS.** If your child clearly understands that you will be a **regular part of their academic life, they will be more responsible and attentive.** I implore you to call, e-mail or visit you child's teacher on a regular basis.

I thank you for your time and commitment to your child and our school. I look forward to seeing you in September.

Yours in Education,

Mrs. F. Lopez
Assistant Director
High School Admission Coordinator