

What to Expect in Middle School

Welcome to Middle School! We had a remarkable 2012-2013 school year and look forward to continuing our history of excellence.

The adoption of and shift to the Common Core aligned curriculum, rigorous instructional practices and standards based assessment will provide many new learning opportunities for your child as well as many new opportunities to improve academic performance. The Common Core standards are a clear set of shared goals and expectations of the knowledge and



skills that will help all students succeed. The standards have been built from the best state standards in the country. They are evidence-based, include rigorous content and skills, and are informed by other top performing countries. The standards are focused, coherent, clear and foster college and career readiness to ensure every student is prepared for the next level of learning. The standards are internationally benchmarked so every student can compete with their international peers and no student will be left behind. These expectations are consistent for all and create a foundation for collaborative work across districts and states.

Program improvements and schedule revisions will support rigorous learning and increase students' opportunity for learning and exploring.



Organizing for Success

The middle school provides many new opportunities for student participation in extra curricular activities. Having time for everything your child wants to do throughout the day, week or month without feeling overwhelmed requires time management and organization. Students, with guidance from their parents, need to find a balance between what they have to do and what they want to do. Every student needs to consider the rewards and consequences of his/her decisions and actions. Being successful requires preparation and planning. To be successful, students need to:

- be on time for school and their classes;
- stay organized, write down all assignments, complete all homework, and turn all work in on time;
- ask questions when they don't understand a concept or directions;
- listen carefully, follow directions, and come to class with all the needed materials;
- schedule time each evening to prepare for the next school day;
- show respect and consideration for others; and
- strive to do their personal best!

As parents you can support your child's success by setting time limits for TV, cellphone use and online gaming, social media and extracurricular activities. Every parent can access information about their child's performance via the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

It is also important for parents to maintain regular communication with their child's teacher and school counselor and attend Open House, conferences and programs designed especially for parents.

2013-2014 Middle School Schedule

Fifth grade students will be assigned to a homeroom teacher and be on a two-teacher team. The two-teacher team will consist of a teacher for Language Arts and Social Studies and a teacher for Math and Science. The middle school schedule will change from a trimester schedule to a semester or marking quarter schedule.

Language arts and math instruction will be 75 minutes and science and social studies will be 45 minutes. The Common Core requires literacy standards across the content areas so students will be required to apply reading, writing, vocabulary and speaking skills and strategies in science and social studies.

Grade 5 Weekly Schedule

GRADE 5					
TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
8:10-9:25	MATH-1 LA-2	MATH-2 LA-1	MATH-1 LA-2	MATH-2 LA-1	MATH-1 LA-2
9:27-10:12	SCI-2 SS-1	SCI-1 SS-2	SCI-2 SS-1	SCI-1 SS-2	SCI-2 SS-1
10:14-10:49	REACH	REACH	REACH	REACH	REACH
10:50-11:15	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
11:15-11:30	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS
11:32-12:47	MATH-2 LA-1	MATH-1 LA-2	MATH-2 LA-1	MATH-1 LA-2	MATH-2 LA-1
12:49-1:34	SCI-1 SS-2	SCI-2 SS-1	SCI-1 SS-2	SCI-2 SS-1	SCI-1 SS-2
1:36-2:12	ENCORE 1	ENCORE 1	ENCORE 1	ENCORE 1	ENCORE 1
2:14-2:50	ENCORE 2	ENCORE 2	ENCORE 2	ENCORE 2	ENCORE 2

Course Offerings

Effective August 2013, there will be several new course offerings. All students will have the opportunity to participate in new courses and take advantage of being in the middle school.

For the first time, fifth graders will take **Spanish** half of the year and will be graded on a pass/fail basis. This new course will focus on understanding the culture and traditions of Spanish speaking countries and learning basic vocabulary and grammar.



Every fifth grader will participate in **STEM Exploratory** (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). STEM class will be part of the twenty-two day Encore rotation. The goal of STEM is to ignite passion for applied science and engineering. The STEM program is an interdisciplinary approach to learning where rigorous concepts are coupled with real-world lessons as students apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics in context that make connections between school and the world. STEM allows students to discover first-hand how the application of math, science and technology come together to solve everyday problems and applies directly to virtually every career field. From auto mechanics to aircraft engineers, forensic scientists to firefighters; everyone in the workforce is touched by STEM on a daily basis.

Explore, the gifted and talented program, will also have a new look.

Students in grades 5 will participate in specialized classes or pull programs once or twice a week for 40 to 90 minutes each session. This new model means fewer repetitive drills and more time for investigating challenging concepts, creating innovative solutions to complex problems and time for self-directed research and learning.

R.E.A.C.H. (Re-teach, Enrich, Accelerate, Challenge, Help) is 35 minutes during which students will have the opportunity to participate in performing groups, receive intervention services if they are struggling to learn grade level skills and/or concepts, and/or work in small groups with a teacher or tutor to expand and challenge their learning.

Please visit the district website, www.npsct.org for updates and additional information.

If you are planning to move or have additional questions, please contact your child's school.



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Transitioning to Middle School

Newington Public Schools
2013–2014



John Wallace Middle School
Martin Kellogg Middle School