

Dear Peters Township Middle School
Parents/Guardians,

The warmth of summer is still with us as we busily prepare for the crispness of fall weather and the anticipated arrival of our seventh and eighth grade students. What an exciting summer we have had, planning for your children! It is with great pleasure that we accept them into our school “to educate” them with a clear vision and academically strong environment.



Many newly added facets are a part of this year’s program. First of all, the Highmark High Five Grant was awarded to our school last spring. *Sam*, as we have named the grant, will be implemented this year with a focus on physical activity, nutrition, bullying, and self-esteem. Fitness equipment, walking routines, literary book clubs, and podcasting are all a part of this program. We designed the outcomes for the total child’s well-being and have incorporated every aspect of becoming a healthy, balanced adolescent. Watch for monthly updates on this endeavor.

Beginning Monday, August 31st, our students will enter the first day with their newly purchased back-to-school supplies. We have attached letters from both grade level teams that will give you a general idea of some of the supplies the middle school students will need. Once school begins, individual subject area teachers will give students a more comprehensive list. Any of these items can be found at local office supply stores. You may want to start purchasing those ever-evasive book covers that all our teachers require. They cut down on the wear and tear of our books; the ones we find that work best and stay on the longest are those that are made of soft, stretchable material.

A tradition that we carry forth this year is the selection by our previous 7th grade students of the following year’s theme. *PTMS: Live to Learn – Learn to Live* verbalizes our desire to help students achieve personal goals and garner a love for education. Learning is hard work – there are no short cuts; but, the intrinsic value of doing well in a subject area, becoming a leader in the classroom, and being a person who possesses character help children evolve into quality citizens. Yes, our instructional practices focus on high expectations; but we envelope your children in a caring and nurturing environment headed by a supportive staff. We emphasize **responsibility**, **honesty**, and **respect** for they are the hallmark of our beliefs.

Another new facet for 2009-2010 is the district-wide Student/Parent Handbook that has been the work of the administrative team for the past two years. This year’s handbook will encompass four common sections that are germane to all of our schools, and list the rules, procedures, and policies of the district. Section Five will be the Middle School segment. This section will give you information on middle school issues only, issues that are reviewed with the students during the first several days of school as part of the social studies curriculum. Students are then tested on the information and are required to have the book signed by a parent/guardian. Please keep

this book handy; though it does not address every item that may arise during a student's life at the middle school, it does give important information that will help you and your child have a successful middle school experience. The handbook is also posted on the middle school website. All school board policies can be accessed on the school district website as well.

The middle school offers many opportunities for parents to become a part of their child's experience. *Open House* is scheduled for Thursday, September 17th, from 6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M., and will give you a chance to meet with your child's teachers and hear about the academic expectations for each class. We also invite you to become a member of the *Middle School Advisory Council*. These meetings are held at 6:30 P.M. in the middle school library. Please call the middle school PTA president if you are interested and look for the dates in your monthly PTA Newsletter. One time change you will want to note is that all school dances will now be from 7:30 P.M. – 9:30 P.M. as opposed to the former time of 8:00 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

Parent/Teacher Conference Day has been set for Thursday, November 12th. Parents can sign up to meet with their child's teachers during Open House; a confirmation slip/phone call will verify the time for your conference. If you do not receive a time slot during this conference day, you will still be able to meet with your child's teachers. Team planning time is set aside daily for parents to meet with their child's team of teachers. Please call the team facilitator to arrange a meeting.

A homework assignment book is given to all students on the first day of school. With this organizer, students are to write daily assignments, log grades, and note long-term projects. **GOAL 7** is designed to guide students in setting goals, teach them to organize time and materials, learn the skills of coping with academic and social issues, and practice the art of note taking and paraphrasing. **GOAL 8** guides students in setting a course for high school academics, teaches students how to be successful on achievement tests, and correlates learning styles with learning skills.

Students' grades can be accessed through *Power School*, our web-based student information system. From September 7th through Open House on September 17th, parents can pick up folders at the middle school counseling office with access information to the site. We urge parents to secure their own password so that they can also receive email notices on grade updates.

Gym lockers will be available to students during physical education class. Students are to bring a combination/key lock for the locker and supply the physical education teacher with the combination/extra key.



As mentioned earlier, respect is a main focus of our school. It is our utmost desire that our students first respect themselves and then others. Their appearance speaks before they even begin talking; thus, we have created a dress code that makes a strong statement for personal respect. We fully enforce it and congratulate our student body for being neatly and appropriately attired. As a reminder when buying back-to-school wardrobes, students are **not** permitted to wear sleeveless shirts, short-shorts/skirts, bare midriff/low cut tops, or low-riding pants. **All shorts and skirts are required to be mid-thigh length – Capri pants and Bermuda shorts indicate the appropriate lengths.** We do not use the “fingertip rule” as an indicator of appropriate length.

In closing, we wish to thank you for giving us the gift of your children for the next two years. We do not take this gift lightly and will do our best to maintain a sharp vision of their education. We look forward to seeing you on August 31st.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anthony F. Merante
Principal

Dr. Mary D. Monsour
Assistant Principal

2009-2010

Peters Township Middle School Highlights

Grade 7

- ☺ Social studies, math, science, language arts, reading, and World Language classes are full-year courses and meet daily.
 - ☺ Technology education, art, health, music, family & consumer science/GOAL 7, and physical education meet daily for twelve weeks. Students progress through each course every twelve weeks.
 - ☺ Electives such as band, chorus, and string orchestra are full-year courses and meet every other day.
 - ☺ Report cards are accessed on-line. The final report card of the year may be mailed home.



Grade 8

- ☺ Social studies, math, science, language arts, reading, and world language classes are full-year courses and meet daily.
- ☺ Computer applications/GOAL 8, art, physical education, technology education, literature/literature enrichment, and music meet daily for twelve weeks. Students progress through each course every twelve weeks.
 - ☺ Electives such as band, chorus, and string orchestra are full-year courses and meet every other day.
- ☺ Report cards are accessed on line. The final report card of the year may be mailed home.

School-wide Procedures

- ☺ If your child forgets something at home (such as lunch, homework, books, gym clothes, etc.), you can bring it to the office, sign the item in, and leave it on the office counter. Students are not called to the office to retrieve these items. Tell your children at the beginning of the school year that if they forget an item, you will bring it to the office and they are responsible for checking the office counter during change of class time.
- ☺ The middle school uses a security system; all doors are locked at all times. In order to gain entrance, push the button, release it, and wait for the door to be unlocked. Immediately report to the office where a secretary will greet you.

Just a reminder!

- ☺ Backpacks and bookbags are not permitted in classrooms.
- ☺ All shirts/tops worn by both girls and boys must have sleeves; girls' tops cannot be revealing in anyway. **All girls' skirts and shorts must be mid-thigh length; Capri and Bermuda shorts are the desired lengths.** Boys' shorts must be appropriately belted; lowriding is not permitted. The dress code will be **strictly enforced**. Students who do not dress appropriately will receive consequences.
- ☺ Student assignment books are provided to all students and are used as hall passes. If the book gets lost, a new one can be purchased in the office for \$4.00.

Peters Township Middle School
625 E. McMurray Rd.
McMurray, PA 15317

Summer 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians of 7th Grade Students:

Welcome to the middle school! You and your child are about to embark on a truly unique academic experience: seventh grade. In seventh grade, many aspects of your child's school day will be different from previous years. For example, students will change classrooms and have different teachers for each class; students will also have increased academic responsibilities, ranging from nightly homework to long-term projects.

Although students will experience a greater degree of independence, they will each be placed on a team, consisting of common math, science, social studies, and language arts teachers. In order to properly prepare for this experience, **please discuss the following with your child:**

- Each student should be well organized. This includes using the school-provided assignment book, bringing writing utensils to each class, and having **a binder filled with paper for each class**. Therefore, items to consider purchasing and having ready for the beginning of the school are:
 - Four 1½ or 2 inch three-ring binders (one for each core subject) filled with lined notebook paper
 - At least four book covers (textbooks will be issued in every class and books should be covered to protect them)
 - Pencils...many pencils! Pens are also useful, especially red pens for editing in language arts!
 - Calculators with at least x^2 and square root functions, such as a TI-30X
 - Highlighters, a ruler, and colored pencils or markers are optional, but nice to have
 - Please try to avoid using large Trapper-Keepers or multiple-subject notebooks as methods of organization. Seventh grade students traditionally have difficulty implementing these devices; results have frequently been troublesome.
- Each student is expected to complete and submit assignments on time. The seventh grade homework policy is stated in the PTMS Student Handbook and reads: *Homework assignments will not be accepted late and project assignments will be accepted one day late with a reduction in grade of 50%*. A student assignment book will be provided at orientation to keep track of all important dates and assignments.
- Students traditionally excel at the middle school when they are involved. Now is a great time to try new clubs and extra-curricular activities, such as History Day, Newspaper, Yearbook, Forensics, Literary Magazine, Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science, Science Olympiad, Math Counts, Student Council, or any of the many sports teams.

We have found that students who consider and meet these expectations are very successful in seventh grade. In addition, at the beginning of the new school year, each teacher will review the specific items that may be useful in each class.

We look forward to meeting you soon!

Sincerely,

The Seventh Grade Teams:

Mr. Dailey—Mrs. Palko—Mrs. Petricca—Mr. Zeminski
Mrs. B. Brown—Mr. Bushmire—Ms. J. Kern—Mr. Wagner
Mrs. Baier – Mr. Maiolo

7th Grade Team Facilitators

Mrs. Petricca
petriccad@pt-sd.org
*4555

Mrs. Palko
palkoj@pt-sd.org
*4549

7th Guidance Counselor:

Ms. Mary Beth Kenny
kennym@pt-sd.org
*4245

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McMurray, PA 15317

Summer 2009

Dear Parent/Guardians of 8th Grade Students,

It is with pride and enthusiasm that we welcome you and your child to the eighth grade class at Peters Township Middle School. The middle school program provides many opportunities for academic and social development. By the end of the eighth grade year, students are well prepared for the transition to the high school.

In order to maximize success, students are required to complete assignments according to specified criteria. Required supplies include:

<i>Science</i>	one, 1.5" white, 3-ring binder with clear front cover and paper supply
<i>Social Studies</i>	one 1.5", 3-ring binder with paper supply
<i>Language Arts</i>	one, 1.5" 3-ring binder with dividers and paper supply; also a bound (not spiral) notebook to be used as a journal.
<i>Math</i>	one spiral notebook and a folder; also a colored pencil (red or blue would be best) <i>Please note: all math work is to be completed in pencil unless otherwise directed.</i>
<i>Foreign Language</i>	one, single-subject notebook; 1 pack of 3"x 5" index cards
<i>All subjects</i>	supply of pencils throughout the year.

Sincerely,

The Eighth Grade Teams:

Ms. Gallagher – Mrs. Ollendyke – Mrs. Kedzuf – Mrs. Mitchell
Mr. Elders – Mrs. Prince – Mr. Greenberger – Ms. R. Brown
Mr. Cheran – Mr. Kelly – Mrs. Zibrida – Mrs. McCue

8th Grade Team Facilitators

Mr. Chris Kelly
kellyc@pt-sd.org
*4208

Mr. Matt Cheran
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*4564

Grade 8 Guidance Counselor

Ms. Vicky Cunningham
*4246