



# Fort Zumwalt School District

## South Middle School

### Principal's Newsletter

## "You are South Middle!"



300 Knaust, St. Peters, MO 63376

Local Phone: 636-281-0776

Metro Phone: 636-379-1973

Website Address: <http://www.fz.k12.mo.us/sms>

Issue No. 1

July 2011

Dear South Middle Parents,

As summer vacation draws to a close, it is once again time to prepare for the start of a new school year. We are excited about the upcoming year and eagerly await the return of our students in a few short weeks. New learning experiences are right around the corner! South Middle wishes you a fun and relaxing July. The first day of school is August 17<sup>th</sup>. See you soon!

Registration is scheduled for the first few weeks in August. Please review the following schedule:

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> <b>Monday, August 1<sup>st</sup></b> 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> <b>Tuesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup></b> 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> <b>Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup></b> 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<b>All Grade Levels:</b> <b>Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup></b> 10:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
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If you are not able to attend registration, schedules and locker assignments may be obtained between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 3:00p.m. Monday through Thursday following registration.

**Committed to Student Learning,**

**Dr. Monte Massey**  
**Building Principal**

**PRINCIPALS, COUNSELORS,**  
**AND SECRETARIES**

Dr. Monte Massey	Principal
Leigh Downs	Building Secretary
Jane Waltman	Financial Secretary
Kathleen Palazzola	Attendance Secretary
Mel Smith	Receptionist
Diane Sturholdt	Main Office Clerk
Denise Reape	Cafeteria Cashier
Kathleen Daniels	Assistant Principal, 6th Grade
Robin Frankie	Secretary, 6th Grade
Jeremy Moore	Assistant Principal, 7th Grade
Kathy Stone	Secretary, 7th Grade
Tracy Clark	Assistant Principal, 8th Grade
Rhonda Rowe	Secretary, 8th Grade
Chris Barfield	Counselor, 6th Grade
Trish Wolz	Counselor, 7th Grade
Dan Huinker	Counselor, 8th Grade

Chris Nolan	Crisis Counselor
Brenda Lovelace	Guidance Secretary

**DATES TO NOTE**

Upcoming dates to take note of are:

**Welcome Student BBQ Event**

(for all incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders and  
new 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students)

- August 12
- 9:30am – 12:00pm

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Open House**

- August 15 6:30pm – 8:00pm

**Beginning Band Night**

- August 15 8:00pm

**7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Open House**

- August 25 6:30pm – 8:00pm

**First Day of School**

- August 17

**NEW STUDENT BBQ**

New students are invited to attend our orientation and barbecue to be held on Friday, August 12<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-12:00. This fun, informative event will give students the opportunity to meet new friends, learn about how middle school works, pick up tips on how to use and organize lockers and assignment notebooks, as well as go on a scavenger hunt

around the building. Leadership students from SMS will lead new students through the different activities which will be facilitated by SMS counselors and teachers. A barbecue lunch will be served at the conclusion of the event. Parents can drop students off beginning at 9:15 and pick them up at noon.

**SIXTH GRADE OPEN HOUSE**

Sixth grade parents are invited to attend Open House August 15<sup>th</sup>. The evening will begin in the "A Gym" located off the lobby at 6:30 pm. Parents will follow their child's schedule, meet the teachers, and learn about middle school expectations and all the exciting learning opportunities in store for our 6<sup>th</sup> graders this year. Parents of band students will meet briefly in the cafeteria following Open House. Music companies will have instruments available to rent at that time for your convenience.

**FRONT DOOR CAMERA**

Parents are welcome at South Middle. As you visit, you may notice we have installed a camera system outside our front door. The camera is located just left of our main door. Please push the button, introduce yourself, and our receptionists can buzz you in. This system allows an added layer of safety at South Middle. Once inside, visitors will still need to sign-in and provide identification to our receptionists.

## REGISTRATION

During registration, students will pick up schedules, have a locker assigned, and complete required forms. Students should come prepared to have their picture taken (school appropriate clothing, no hats, etc.). Parents will have the option to purchase an assignment book (\$3.00), spirit wear (prices vary), and a yearbook (\$21 at registration and up to Dec. 22, \$23 after Jan. 1, \$25 on the day yearbooks are issued at the end of the school year.).

## RESIDENCY

If your family's address has changed, please bring "proof of residency" to registration in order to pick up your child's schedule at registration.

Requirements for proof of residency are:

1) Lease/rental agreement with receipt showing deposit, 2) Closing or settlement statement from recent purchase of home, 3) Copy of unpaid gas or electric bill (may be an electronic printout, if it resembles an actual bill) This must have your current name and address on it.

## SMS INFORMATION

SMS is committed to keeping parents informed. We maintain a daily bulletin on our Parent Portal system detailing regular student announcements, after-school activity reminders, lunch menu items, student of the week, thought of the day, and major school events. We also send out periodic parent e-mails and newsletters throughout the school year. Parents can also visit our school website, listed above, for periodic updates regarding after school club, activity, and intramural dates, as well as for a general list of calendar events. The website also provides a lot of other helpful contact and school related information.

## PARENT PORTAL

By visiting our district login webpage at <http://sdm.fz.k12.mo.us/fzco>, clicking on the "Parent" tab, and entering your specific username and password, parents can view the Fort Zumwalt Parent Portal website. Upon entering the website, you will first see South Middle's daily student bulletin. This offers a host of up-to-date information including after-school activities, special events, the next day's lunch menu, and much more. Once you have viewed our bulletin, the website presents a snapshot of your child's assigned work, grades, attendance, and lunch account information. You can expect to see daily work and quiz grades entered within 1 week of the due date, test grades entered within 2 weeks, project grades entered within 3 weeks (with more time given for large-scale projects), and written papers entered within 3 weeks (again with more time given for large-scale papers). Please be patient with us as we learn how to maximize this technology.

In order to access Parent Portal, you must visit our school's main office, fill out a form, and show a valid ID to a school district representative (secretary). We encourage you to interact with this system frequently, in order to stay informed and in communication with teachers. Students can also access a limited view of Parent Portal by logging onto the same website and "clicking" the tab for students. Students then input the same user name and password they normally use in the computer lab. If you visit the system to view your child's assigned work, you might notice that some teaching teams have external websites for posting assignments.

## SCHOOL HOURS AND HALF DAYS

School hours expanded last year to include new start and end times. As was last year, the start time will be 7:20 and the school day will end at 2:20. Students will be released from the cafeteria / lobby / gym areas at 7:05 to go to their lockers and prepare for their day. At 7:15 a bell will ring to remind students they have 5 minutes to report to class. Each class period will be 60 minutes long. Why expand the school day? Increasing the number of minutes our students attend school each day will allow for the overall district calendar to "bank" time. This then allows the calendar to include 8 half days. Each half day will still begin at 7:20 and end at 11:50. After that time, teachers will participate in professional development activities and presentations. Teachers will also have time to collaborate about highly effective teaching strategies and discuss how to best help promote student learning.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Last year Fort Zumwalt adopted a district-wide approach to teaching and learning called Professional Learning Communities. Our teachers have engaged in professional development with a focus on meeting in Collaborative Learning Teams (CLTs). Teachers take dedicated time to participate in professional conversations about "best" classroom practices, as well as ways to reflect on curriculum and lesson planning. An example would be: The three 7<sup>th</sup> grade math teachers might give students a common test or assignment that included the same questions and scoring guide. Teachers look over how students scored and discuss why student scores might have turned out as they did. Teachers would then work together to interpret how well students understood the content and design specific interventions and enrichment in response to student needs. Having conversations in this way, we are able to use assessment information not only to measure learning, but also to promote learning.

Turning the evidence of student learning into information teachers can be reflective about, and responsive to, allows instruction to continually improve over time. Below are the main focus areas of each of our collaborative learning teams:

### **1st Big Idea: *Focus on Learning***

We accept high levels of learning for all students as the fundamental purpose of our team and therefore are willing to examine all practices in light of their impact on learning.

### **2nd Big Idea: *A Collaborative Culture***

We can achieve our fundamental purpose of high levels of learning for all students only if we work together. We cultivate a collaborative culture through the development of norms we've developed together and through goals we've determined will benefit our students, as well as ourselves.

### **3rd Big Idea: *Focuses on Results***

We assess our effectiveness on the basis of "proof of learning" rather than anecdotal information. Individuals and teams seek relevant data and use that information to promote continuous improvement.

In addition to these ideas, we are using 5 core questions to guide our work. As we discuss student learning, we continually ask ourselves:

#### **1. What do we want students to learn?**

**\*Curriculum**

#### **2. What methods will we use to help students learn?**

**\*Instruction**

#### **3. How will we know if students learned it?**

**\*Assessment**

#### **4. What will we do if students don't learn it?**

**\*Interventions**

#### **5. What will we do if students have learned it?**

**\*Enrichment**

## PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents interested in volunteering during the year are encouraged to sign up during registration.

## BUS INFORMATION

Bus route information will be available during registration.

## GUIDANCE OFFICE

Parents and guardians, if there are concerns we can help any family with, please let us know. It is always helpful for counselors and principals to be aware of concerns that range from problems with lockers and navigating friendships to more serious situations regarding family crisis and custody concerns. We are ready and willing to help.

## VACCINATION

Effective beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, per requirements of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, the Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) vaccine booster **will be required for all incoming eighth (8th) grade students**. The Tdap vaccine will be required if the child has completed the recommended childhood DTAP/DTP vaccination series and **has not** received a TD booster within the past two (2) years. If you feel your child has had this booster within the last 2 years, please send or bring in documentation; or it can be faxed to 636-281-0006.

**If you have questions about this immunization please contact the St. Charles County Health's Immunization Dept.: 636-949-1857**

Your student will not be able to register for school if the requirements for Tdap booster have not been met. Thank you for keeping your child healthy!

## A+ and SAL

We wanted to make parents aware of some the opportunities that exist for students who are struggling academically. The A+ program consists of South High students who come over to South Middle after school to help our students with homework and organize their lockers. Students who do not submit homework by the date it is due, may be directed to attend A+ tutoring after school. Assistant principals will have students communicate with home to ensure parents are aware of arrangements to stay after school to restore academic standings. SAL (Student Assisted Learning) is a class students can take, in place of an elective course. SAL provides help from a certified teacher for an hour each day. Please contact your child's counselor if you are interested in exploring these options.

## ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

When dropping off students in the morning, please use the northern most entrance and be sure to stay in the lane designated for cars. Please do not drive in the bus areas (two lanes closest to school) during arrival or dismissal times. Also, due to safety concerns, students **must** be dropped off at the crosswalk closest to the Main Office. During dismissal, bus riders and car riders will exit immediately at 2:20. Parents who pick up are asked to enter the parking lot only (not the bus loop) and form two lines on either side of the lot. We ask that you leave a gap in the center to allow cars to continue moving once students have gotten into each vehicle. We also ask that cars not travel down the center lane on Knaust Road or drop off students directly on Knaust Road.

Walkers and bike riders will be held back in a team classroom until busses are off of the lot. If your

child's daily routine changes, please send a signed note ahead of time to make us aware of the change. You are also welcome to contact your child's grade level office to ensure we are aware of the change. By holding walkers and car riders in the same classroom every day, we will get to know each child's routine. If we see a concern with a student walking instead of riding the bus, we will try to communicate with parents. We encourage parents to check with your grade level office to maintain an awareness of how students are getting home. Please talk with your child about safe behaviors during these critical times. Our parking lot can be a busy place.

## LUNCH

Our lunch account process is a debit system. Students use a 4 digit PIN number to debit money from their account. Money must be deposited in the account for students to use their PIN number. Applications for free or reduced lunches can also be obtained at any time. Basic lunch prices are as follows: Lunch = \$2.20, Breakfast = \$1.35, and Milk/Fruit Juice = .60. Lunch account information can also be viewed via the Parent Portal system. The Parent Portal system also provides parents the convenience of depositing money into student meal accounts using a credit card, debit card or electronic check. PayPal is used as the clearing agent for these transactions. It is a secure online payment processing service that uses the latest electronic security to protect your information. Credit and debit card transactions can be completed without a PayPal account. However, payments made directly from your checking or savings require a personal PayPal account where you must register your bank information. Please note that by using PayPal, the District does not have access to any of your credit card or bank information. Fort Zumwalt School District is only offering this service as a convenience to parents. There is a nominal convenience fee for using the online payment service for each transaction you complete (One transaction can cover one student or multiple students). You must have a Parent Portal account to make online payments. Directions are as follows:

1. Sign on to the Parent Portal and select the 'Meals' tab > 'Online Payment'.
2. Enter how much money to deposit in the box next to each student listed.
3. The convenience charge will be displayed and added to the transaction total.
4. When ready, click on the 'Proceed to Verification Step' button
5. Verify your information and click either 'Proceed to PayPal' or 'Go Back to Previous Screen' to make changes.

6. In the PayPal screen, you will have the option to deposit via credit or debit card without signing into a PayPal account, or you may sign in to your personal PayPal account and complete transaction. (The benefit of using a personal PayPal account is that you won't need to reenter your payment information every time you make a payment)
7. An email will be sent to you from PayPal indicating your transaction was successful.
8. After completing the process, you can resume your Parent Portal session by closing the PayPal window.

Note: The online payment service is currently only available for meal account deposits. There is a small charge to cover processing. More detailed directions and fee information are available in our main office.

## SUPPLY LISTS

We have attempted to consolidate the supply lists of each grade-level in order to allow families to begin taking advantage of summer sales on school supplies. As you look at each supply list (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade), you will notice a general list of items in the top section, then each specific teaching team as a few items they recommend in addition to the general list. Families will learn the specific team each student was assigned to on the day of registration. These supply lists are available on our school website (see above). As well, we have sent our supply lists to area stores. Below are stores we have shared our supply lists with:

### Office Max

- 1927 Wentzville Parkway
- 2845 I-70 South Service Rd.
- 154 THF Blvd.

### Walmart

- 2897 Veterans Memorial Pkwy
- 1307 Hwy K
- 1971 Wentzville Parkway
- 6100 Ronald Reagan Dr.

### K-Mart

- 20 O'Fallon Square

### Target Stores

- 7955 Hwy N
- 2300 Highway K
- 3881 Mexico Road
- 6241 Mid Rivers Mall Drive

### Walgreens

- Wolfrum & 94
- Bryan & Mexico

### Dierbergs

- Hwy 79

## LOCKERS

Students are assigned lockers during registration. Each student will have his or her own locker. There are several sizes and styles of lockers, but not enough of any one kind to assign to a specific group. Lockers are assigned randomly with consideration for the student's grade and team. You may want to purchase a locker shelf to maximize storage space in our lockers.

6<sup>th</sup> Grade: General locker dimensions are 11" deep and 12" wide.

7<sup>th</sup> Grade: General locker dimensions are 20" deep and 9" wide, with a separate, small storage area above the locker.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade: General locker dimensions are 11" deep and 12" wide.

Lockers are property of South Middle and are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel at any time. Police officers will periodically bring in dogs to sniff for narcotics near lockers and in personal belongings. If a dog alerts officers to a student's locker or personal belongings, that student's items will be searched to ensure student safety.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Our school is committed to maintaining an environment for its students that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is prohibited and is defined as unwelcome or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, imposed on the basis of sex, by an employee of the school or fellow student. If a student believes he or she is being sexually harassed, the student should bring the concern to the attention of a principal. The principal will fully investigate the concern and will notify the student and his/her parents of the result of the investigation. If the investigation substantiates the sexual harassment has occurred, the district will take appropriate disciplinary action against the offender. There will be no retaliation against or adverse treatment of any student who uses the complaint procedure to resolve a concern.

## NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Fort Zumwalt School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. If you have any inquiries or complaints concerning the application of the Fort Zumwalt School district's policy of nondiscrimination, you may contact Dr. Bernard DuBray, Superintendent of Schools at 110 Virgil St., O'Fallon, MO, 63366, (636)272-6620 or (636) 240-2072.

## CELL PHONES

As technology continues to advance, cell phones present an interesting challenge to our school environment. When used properly, they can improve student safety and make it easier for parents to reach students as they travel to and from school. However,

they can also cause classroom disruptions, may compromise test security, and may be used inappropriately at times. During the 2011-2012 school year, students who fail to comply with the cell phone policy will face disciplinary action. Please discuss the following cell phone procedures with your child:

1. Electronic devices, including cell phones and iPods, are strongly discouraged. These items, if brought to school, are at the students' risk, and if lost or stolen remain the students' responsibility.
2. Students must not "display" or have cell phones out for any reason during school hours. Cell phones should not be visible at all during the school day. Cell phones may be used after school for purposes of contacting a parent and/or arranging transportation.
3. Cell phones must be turned **off** (not simply silenced) during school hours. Students are not allowed to use cell phones during the school day. Any student needing to speak with a parent may use the school phone in their grade level office. We are also willing to help parents, who call into the school, communicate with students in a timely manner.

So that parents are aware, we will be directing all students to keep cell phone and electronic devices in their lockers throughout the school day. Students will be expected to place these devices in their locker beginning at 7:05, when they are released to go to class, until 2:20. Walkers and bike riders will need to leave electronic devices in their lockers until they are released.

## DRESS CODE

Appropriate student dress codes naturally evolve as styles of clothing change. Dress code expectations in effect for the upcoming school year include the following stipulations:

- Students shall not wear the following:
  1. hats, bandannas, shower caps or other non-therapeutic headgear inside the school building.
  2. low cut muscle shirts/halter tops/midribs/spaghetti straps/backless or racer back apparel/sagging pants/short shorts/skirts which are above mid-thigh.
  3. undergarments cannot be exposed (including boxers and bra straps)
  4. clothing/stickers/insignias/ colors/ visible tattoos that indicate membership in, affiliation with, or support of any gang or similar organization associated with violence, drugs, intimidation or other criminal activity (including rebel flags and swastikas)
  5. clothing which promotes drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and/or its products
  6. clothing with sexually suggestive messages, messages that promote the occult, or messages of a vulgar nature
  7. clothing with holes in inappropriate places or exposing undergarments above mid-thigh
  8. jewelry and chains that may be used as a weapon including wallet chains that are 3 inches or longer or that present a safety concern.

When, in the judgment of the principal, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat of safety, the student may be required to make modifications. Please help us maintain a productive learning environment by ensuring your student is aware of these dress code expectations. A full listing regarding student appearance can be found on the district website or obtained from South Middle School. Any new or additional dress code criteria will be publicized upon implementation. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

All responsible public agencies are required to locate, evaluate, and identify children with disabilities who are under the jurisdiction of the agency, regardless of the severity of the disability, including children attending private schools, highly mobile children, such as migrant and homeless children, and children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education even though they are advancing from grade to grade. The Fort Zumwalt School District assures that it will provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21 under its jurisdiction. Disabilities include autism, deaf/blindness, emotional disorders, hearing impairment and deafness, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment/blindness and young child with a developmental delay. The Fort Zumwalt School District assures that it will provide information and referral services necessary to assist the State in the implementation of early intervention services for infants and toddlers eligible for the Missouri First Steps program. The Fort Zumwalt School District assures that personally identifiable information collected, used, or maintained by the agency for the purposes of identification, evaluation, placement or provision of FAPE of children with disabilities may be inspected and/or reviewed by their parents/guardians. Parents/guardians may request amendment to the educational record if the parent/guardian believes the record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of their child. Parents have the right to file complaints with the U.S. Department of Education or the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning alleged failures by the district to meet the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The Fort Zumwalt School District has developed a Local Compliance Plan for the implementation of State Regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This plan contains the agency's policies and procedures regarding storage, disclosure to third parties, retention and destruction of personally identifiable information and the agency's assurances that services are provided in compliance with the General Education Provision Act (GEPA). This plan may be reviewed during regular school hours, on days school is in session, in the office of the Superintendent of Schools. This notice will be provided in native languages as appropriate.