



Fort Zumwalt South Middle School Principal's Newsletter



“South Middle...A Caring, Capable, and Connected Community!”

300 Knaust, St. Peters, MO 63376

Phone: 636-281-0776

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

July 2016

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. Below you will find the days when students and families are invited to come in and pick up schedules, try locker combinations, and find classrooms.

Student Schedule Pick-up Dates:

6th grade

Tuesday, August 2nd

7:30 am – 4:30 pm

7th & 8th grades

Wednesday, August 3rd

7:30 am – 4:30 pm

All grade levels

Monday, August 8th

1:00 pm – 7:00 pm

If you are not able to attend schedule pick-up days, schedules and locker assignments may be obtained in our main office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, prior to the start of school. The first day of school is August 16th. See you soon!

South Middle...A Caring, Capable, Connected Community,

Monte Massey

Dr. Monte Massey

Building Principal

SOUTH MIDDLE STAFF

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Dr. Monte Massey | Principal |
| Leigh Downs | Building Secretary |
| Jane Waltman | Financial Secretary |
| Kathleen Harris | Attendance Secretary |
| Heather Walters | Main Office Clerk |
| Terri Vermillon | Main Office Clerk |
| Denise Reape | Cafeteria Cashier |
| Kathleen Bahan | Assistant Principal, 6th Grade |
| Allison Fowler | Secretary, 6th Grade |
| Eric Schwendeman | Assistant Principal, 7th Grade |
| To Be Announced | Secretary, 7th Grade |
| Brenda Parisi | Assistant Principal, 8th Grade |
| Rhonda Rowe | Secretary, 8th Grade |
| Trish Wolz | Counselor, 6th Grade |
| Dan Huinker | Counselor, 7th Grade |
| Julie Modaff | Counselor, 8th Grade |
| Laura DiLeo | Crisis Counselor |
| Kristine Gaffney | Guidance Secretary |

ONLINE REGISTRATION

In an effort to “Go Green”, the Fort Zumwalt School District is offering an online registration option for all parents for the 2016–2017 school year. Parents can access an “Online Registration” feature when they log onto the Parent Portal. This feature provides parents the opportunity to begin the registration process for the 2016–2017 school year prior to the designated schedule pick-up days beginning in August. While the online registration does not substitute your attendance during the student schedule pick-up or open house events, it is an effort to assist you in completing many of the “pre-registration” forms necessary for your student’s successful start to the school year. Completing this information will help speed up the schedule pick-up process on the day of registration. Paper copies of these forms are also available for printing off of our website or will be available at registration. Also, if you need assistance with your parent portal account please contact our main office.

STUDENT SCHEDULE PICK-UP

During registration, students pick up daily schedules, get a locker, and parents complete required forms (if not already completed online). Students should come prepared to have their picture taken (school appropriate clothing, see page 4 of this newsletter). Parents have the option to purchase an assignment book (\$3.50), spirit wear (prices vary), and a yearbook. Yearbooks are \$25 at registration. Once second semester begins, in January, yearbooks can be purchased for \$27. Checks can be made payable to South Middle School. Credit/debit cards will also be accepted (a convenience fee will be added to credit card transactions).

NEW STUDENT BBQ

All incoming 6th grade students are invited to attend our orientation and barbecue to be held on Friday, August 12th from 9:00am to noon. This fun, informative event will give students the opportunity to meet new friends, learn about how middle school works, and learn tips about how to use lockers and assignment notebooks. Our South Middle “Mustang Connection” students will lead new students through the different activities. A barbecue hot dog lunch will be served at the conclusion of the event. Parents can drop students off beginning at 8:45am and pick them up at noon. Please have your child’s name prominently displayed in the front window of your car during pick up. As you might imagine, we will have a bustling parking lot that day, so please be patient with us. We ask that families car pool if possible. Safety will be our main concern.

SIXTH GRADE OPEN HOUSE

Sixth grade parents are invited to attend Open House August 9th. The evening will begin in the “A Gym” (located off the lobby) at 6:30 pm. Parents will follow their child’s schedule, meet our teachers, and learn about middle school expectations and all the exciting learning opportunities in store for our 6th graders this year. Parents of band students will meet briefly in the back cafeteria following Open House. Music companies will have instruments available to rent at that time for your convenience.

DATES TO NOTE

6th Grade Student Orientation & BBQ Event

- August 12, 9:00am – 12:00pm

6th Grade Open House

- August 9, 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Beginning Band Night

- August 9, Following Open House

7th/8th Grade Open House

- August 25, 6:30pm – 8:00pm

First Day of School

- August 16

FRONT DOOR CAMERA

Parents are welcome at South Middle. As you visit, you may notice a camera system outside our front door. The camera is located on the wall just to the left of our main entrance. 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 need to sign-in and provide identification.

RESIDENCY

If your family's address has changed, please bring "proof of residency" with you to the schedule pick-up day in order to pick up your child's schedule at registration. Requirements for proof of residency can be found by [clicking here](#).

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services require the **Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) and MCV (Meningococcal Conjugate) vaccines for all incoming 8th grade students**. If your child has had these vaccines, please send or bring in documentation; or it can be faxed to **636-281-0006**. Your student may not be able to attend school if vaccination requirements have not been met. **If you have questions about this immunization please contact the St. Charles County Health's Immunization Dept.: 636-949-1857**

SCHOOL HOURS AND HALF DAYS

The start time for South Middle will be 7:20am and the school day will end at 2:20pm. Students will be released from the cafeteria 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 about 60 minutes long, with 5 minutes passing time between each class period. The school calendar will include 9 half days. Each half day will still begin at 7:20am, but will end at 11:50am. After students are dismissed, 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 help promote student learning.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents interested in volunteering during the year are encouraged to sign up during schedule pick-up days. We will have a table set up where the proper forms can be completed. Volunteers are always needed for field trips and book fairs.

BUS INFORMATION

Bus route information will be available during schedule pick-up days.

PARENT PORTAL

In order to gain access to Parent Portal, you must visit our school's main office, fill out a form, and show a valid ID to a school district representative.

Parents can access the Parent Portal by:

- 1) Visiting Fort Zumwalt School District webpage at <http://www.fz.k12.mo.us>.
- 2) Hover over the "Parents, Students, Alumni" tab
- 3) Click on "Parents"
- 3) Choose "Log-in to the Portal" on the left-side menu.
- 4) Enter your specific username and password.

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. We encourage parents to interact with this system frequently, in order to stay informed and in communication with teachers. You may also notice that some teachers and teaching teams have external websites for posting assignments and other 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). Students can also access a limited view of the 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.

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 with useful web-links which lead to additional resource information. Parents can visit our school website (<http://sms.fz.k12.mo.us>) for a general list of calendar events, as well as for after school club, activity and intramural dates (Calendar information is under construction and subject to change). Our website also provides a lot of other helpful contact and school related information.

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 issues that range from problems with lockers and navigating friendships to more serious situations regarding a family crisis or custody concerns. We are ready and willing to help.

LOCKERS

Students are issued lockers at 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 each student's grade, team, and any unique needs. **OUR LOCKERS RECEIVED A NEW PAINT JOB THIS SUMMER. WE ARE ASKING THAT NO TAPE OR STICKERS BE USED INSIDE OR OUTSIDE. ONLY MAGNETS CAN BE USED. RIBBONS CAN BE USED TO OPEN UP THE TOP PORTION OF 7TH AND 8TH GRADE LOCKERS.** You may want to purchase a locker shelf to maximize storage space in our lockers. Please see locker dimensions below:

- 6th Grade: General locker dimensions are 11" deep and 12" wide.
- 7th Grade: General locker dimensions are 20" deep and 9" wide, with a separate, small storage area above the locker.
- 8th Grade: General locker dimensions are 11" deep and 12" wide. (Lockers downstairs are not as tall.)

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 contraband 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.

A+ TUTORING

We wanted to make parents aware of an opportunity that exists 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. We have revamped this program to provide targeted help. Students who repeatedly do not submit homework by the date it is due, will be directed to attend A+ tutoring after school. The same day homework is not submitted, students will call their parents and stay after in the library to complete work. The program runs Monday through Thursday and a free activity bus is provided on those days. A+ tutoring goes a long way toward helping students restore their academic standing, allowing some students to avoid summer school as a result of their participation in A+.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will be held on the dates/times listed below. We welcome our parents to take advantage of this opportunity to reconnect with teachers after the school year gets underway. In addition, school fundraiser items will be available for pick up in our lower gym throughout parent-teacher conferences.

Scheduled Conference Times

- October 25: 5:00pm-9:00pm
- October 26: 11:00am-4:00pm

Drop-In Conference Times

- October 26: 5:00pm-8:00pm

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 = \$2.50, Breakfast = \$1.40, Milk = \$.60, and Juice = \$.40. 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. Supply lists are posted on our website - 6th, 7th, and 8th grade respectively (<http://sms.fz.k12.mo.us>). You will notice a general list of items in the top section, then each specific teaching team may have a few items they recommend in addition to the main supplies. Students will learn which team they are assigned to upon entering the building on schedule pick-up day.

In addition, we have sent our supply lists to area stores. We have shared our supply lists with Walmart and Target stores:

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

If your child is going to be absent, please let the attendance office know as soon as possible. You can reach Ms. Harris or leave a message at 636-281-0776.

MUSTANG MISSION STATEMENTS

We are proud to share Fort Zumwalt South Middle's "Mustang Mission" with you!

"South Middle...A Caring, Capable, Connected Community!"

Our staff members and students have worked hard to create mission statements which represent how we approach school life at South Middle. With regard to our staff, a large group of us met over the summer to carefully define each word included in our school mission. All of our teachers then collaborated to develop our core commitments. The resulting [Mustang Mission for our staff members](#) can be found on our school website. It is inspiring to read through the commitments below and realize that the very teachers who created this mission are working with our children. We also expanded our mission to include students. A large group of our students stayed after school on three occasions, to take part in the development of our [Mustang Mission for students](#). Students collaborated to build core commitments that all students at South Middle should keep in mind as they interact with each other, participate in school activities, and as they work together in the classroom. It is exciting to consider that these ideals were created by the combined voices of many of our wonderful students. The final Mustang Mission is meant to be more than just a slogan! We hope to use it as a guide for all we do at South Middle.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This year will be the sixth year of Fort Zumwalt's district-wide adoption of [Professional Learning Communities](#) (PLCs). PLCs are an effective way for teachers to focus on student learning. Our teachers continually engage in professional development with a focus on meeting in Collaborative Learning Teams (CLTs). Teachers dedicate time to reviewing student assessment results, participate in conversations about effective instructional practices, and discuss ways to improve curriculum and lesson planning. The district has set aside 9 early release days and 2 full-day professional development days whereby teachers can also attend workshops and trainings.

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, intellectual disabilities/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.

Local school districts in the State of Missouri are required to conduct an annual census of all children with disabilities or suspected disabilities from birth to age twenty-one (21) that reside in the district. This census must be compiled by December 1 of each year. This information is treated as confidential and must include: name of the child; parent/legal guardian's name/address; birth date and age of the child; the child's disability; and the services provided to the child. If you have a child with a disability or know of a child with a disability who is not attending the public school, please contact Dr. Henry St. Pierre, Fort Zumwalt's Assistant Superintendent for Special Services, at 636-272-6620, ext 18349. This notice will be provided in native languages as appropriate.

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.

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 2015-2016 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.

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 555 E. Terra Lane, O'Fallon, MO, 63366, (636) 272-6620 or (636) 240-2072.