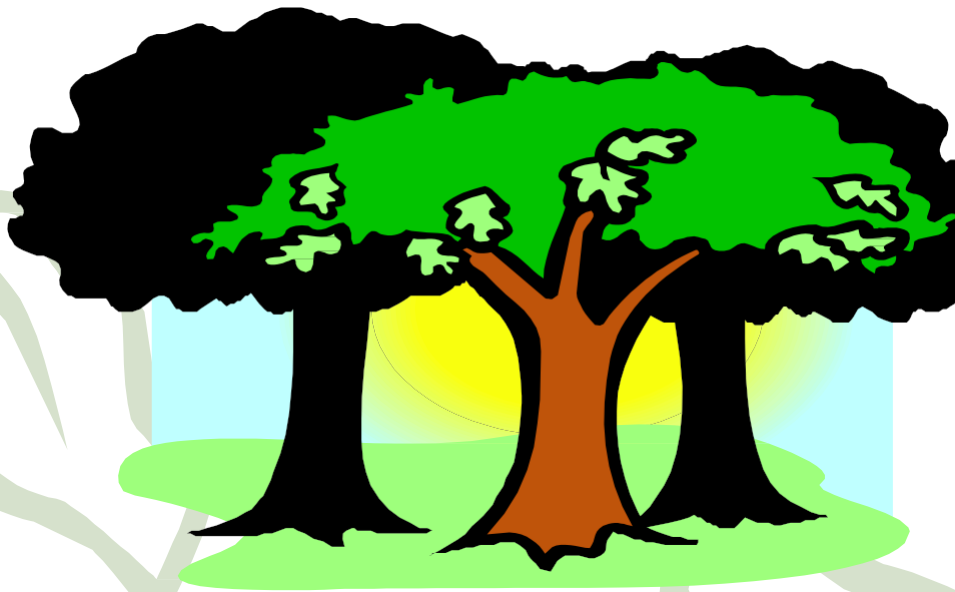


**Hidden Oaks
&
Twin Oaks
Middle School**



**New Student Transition Guide
2016-2017**

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Remember to come to the WEB (Where Everybody Belongs) Orientation Day for all 6th graders! This is a morning event on August 25th for all 6th graders where you have a chance to meet other 6th grade students, have fun, play games and interact with your 8th grade WEB leader and mentor. Parents will need to drop their child off at 8 am and then we will provide busing back home at 12 pm. Please mark this important date on your calendar!

Back to School night is another event that you should definitely attend. This will take place on August 31st. You will get a chance to meet your teachers, get your lock and locker ready, walk through your schedule and learn more about middle school!

HIDDEN OAKS/TWIN OAKS VISION STATEMENT

Hidden Oaks and Twin Oaks Middle School, in partnership with parents and community, are committed to meeting the unique academic, artistic, physical, social, and emotional needs of middle level children. This student-centered educational environment encourages respect for self and others, acceptance of individual differences, and promotion of self-discipline and life-long learning.



STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Almost every student coming into the middle school hopes to have a good year, socially and academically. Your attitude is one of the most important things that will determine your success in school (or anywhere else for that matter!) A “winning attitude” and motivation are keys to success. You have to care enough to try to do the best you can.

All middle school staff members are looking forward to working with students and parents to make your middle school experience the most successful and enjoyable that it can be. For this to happen, we have expectations for all of our students. It is the responsibility of every middle school student to contribute to a positive school environment. These expectations are as follows:

- *THINK POSITIVELY
- *RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS
- *PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES AND DO YOUR BEST
- *BE IN CLASS, ON TIME, AND PREPARED
- *BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF AND OTHERS
- *HAVE AN APPROPRIATE SENSE OF HUMOR

GETTING STARTED... Testimonials

Getting started the right way in a school is very important to how you'll feel about the school and the other students. You'll be meeting new people and have many chances to make new friends. Some of you may be a little concerned about coming to the middle school and wondering just how you'll get along with your teachers, with other students, or other adults in the school. Past students at Hidden Oaks and Twin Oaks claim it's not anything to worry about, and they offer some of their advice based on their own experiences:



"I think you will like the middle school. I'm in the 8th grade, today's the last day of school and I know I am going to miss it. When you first come in, it seems like you'll never know your way around, but in a few weeks you'll be a pro."

"Middle school is much more fun than elementary. At first, you'll miss the no more recess, no more first in line, and no more show and tell. That's no big deal though. You'll soon like the new things more."

"I was very nervous the first day of school. I thought I knew where everything was, but with so many kids in the building, I forgot. My teachers helped a lot by showing me where to go first thing and throughout the rest of the day."

"There are a lot of good things about middle school even if there is more work. We get to be in activities that are fun. We may not get to have holiday parties but we do get to have other parties and special days that aren't on holidays-Wear Red Days, Twin Day, and Spirit Days."

"Relax, middle school is fun! I really liked it. It will go slow sometimes, but then, all of a sudden, the end of the year will come and you will hardly be able to believe it's over!"

"My best advice is to be on time to your classes, listen in class, keep an assignment notebook, study for tests, and do your homework."

"During the first few days, if you feel like you're the only dumb person who doesn't know what is going on, look around. There will be lots of others who feel that way too. Remember, everybody here was new once upon a time."

MATERIALS NEEDED

Getting started also means being prepared with materials for that first day. Some of the following questions and answers may help you to know what to expect:

How do I know what to bring with me on the first day of school?

You will get a supply list at the beginning of the school year from your school. You will need to purchase items like: a binder to store all of your materials together, #2 pencils with erasers, a scientific calculator, math compass, protractor and ruler, a box of colored pencils, and wide-lined or college ruled loose-leaf paper.



Helpful Hint:
Try to have a different colored notebook and folder for each subject.

**A supply list for each grade level will be located this summer on the Hidden Oaks and Twin Oaks web pages: www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us

Do I need a backpack or a book bag?



A book bag or a backpack is great for bringing things to and from school! Once you get to school in the morning, you can put your book bag in your locker for the day and take it home when you leave. The middle school does not allow book bags to be used in the hallways or during classes.



What do I need for physical education class?

Tennis shoes with tied laces and **socks**, your **Official PE T-Shirt** (purchased from the physical education department and will be labeled in permanent marker with student's first and last names), **Athletic Shorts** (no jeans) and **Sweatshirt and Athletic Pants** (no jeans), **Deodorant** - (no aerosol sprays), **Swimsuit**, and **Towel & Plastic Bag** (to be brought to school during the swimming unit).

*Old, inexpensive clothing is highly recommended. Clothing often gets grass stained, torn or lost. Clothing must fit so that undergarments are not visible. Sweatpants or athletic pants may not drag on the floor. Changing into PE clothes is necessary so that your clothes do not get torn or dirty during fun, exciting and energetic activities!

Common Questions

Q: When can I stay after school?

A: You can stay after school if a teacher is supervising you or if you are in a scheduled activity. All students must be out of the building by 2:30pm unless supervised by a teacher or a coach. Students are encouraged to make arrangements to get picked up from school as soon as their activity is over.

Q: How do I get home if I've stayed after school for a teacher?

A: We do not have an activity bus that picks up students who stay after school for sports or extra help from teachers. Therefore, you can get home one of three ways 1) make arrangements to be picked up by one of your family members, neighbor, relative, or friend's parent 2) walk or 3) ride your bicycle.

Q: What do I do if I am feeling really sick during the school day?

A: If you don't feel well during the day ask your teacher for a pass to the nurse's office, (right next to the main office). A health aide is here to help you with any real medical problems you have. If you need to take medicine during school hours, make sure you bring the medicine to the nurse's office with a note from your parent and the prescription or note from the doctor.

Q: What are things called passes? When do I need one?

A: During class time, you must have written permission from a teacher (in other words, a pass) to go anywhere else in the building (for example, locker, restroom, guidance office, nurse's office, or another classroom). Hall supervisors will request to see your pass.

Q: When I need to call home, where do I go? Which phone do I use?

A: A phone is available for making calls before/after school. It is located in the main hallway (HOMS) and guidance office (TOMS).

Q: What do I do when I've been absent from school?

A: Your parents/guardians should call the day you are absent and tell the secretary why you are not in school. If a parent/ guardian doesn't call in, you need to bring a note from home when you return, saying why you were absent. Come to the office and get an absence slip from the secretary in the office. You then take this slip to all of your classes and give it to each teacher. They will sign it telling you what you missed and have to make-up.

****REMEMBER**** You have two days to make up your work for every day that you are absent. (Example: Two days absent = four school days to make up your work). It is your responsibility to ask your teacher what you missed!

Attendance Phone Numbers:

Twin Oaks 226-0501

Hidden Oaks 226-0701

Q: Is it really true that teachers mark you tardy when you're late?

A: Yes, it is true! You have more than enough time to get from class to class. If you stop to visit, or hang out on your way to class, you'll probably be tardy. You can still walk around with friends and talk along the way, but don't be late. Talk while you walk!

"Don't worry about tardies the first week of school. Just be careful after that. Once you know your way around, you won't have a reason to be late for class. If you don't stand around and talk between classes, you'll have all the time you need."

Q: Will I ever be able to go to my locker during the school day?

A: Yes, however you may not have time to go to your locker between every class. You may want to carry several books at a time with you to class so you do not have to stop at your locker each hour, especially if you have a class at the other building. You have five minutes between each class as a passing period. Just keep in mind that if your locker is on the opposite side of the building as your class, you may have a difficult time getting to class on time if you choose to talk with your friends, etc.

Q: Can I ride the bus home with a friend after school?

A: Students must ride their assigned bus home each day. Students will only be permitted to ride alternate busses in emergency situations. You must talk with the office at least 1 day prior to the day you want to take a different bus.

Q: What if my parents want to talk to my teachers or meet with my teachers?

A: The best thing to do if your parents want to talk to your teachers is to call them directly or your parents can email them. Teacher's email addresses can be found on the HOMS/TOMS website at <http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us>. Your parents can also call the school counselor to set up a team meeting to talk with your teachers. We have conferences four times a year-once for each quarter.

Q: What are extra-curricular activities?

To join extra-curricular activities, you need to listen to announcements and sign up with coaches or supervisors of the activity. There is a complete listing of activities on the Prior Lake website under activities and then middle school <http://www.plhsactivities.org/page/show/535666-middle-school-activities->

The following must be turned in before a student can practice or participate in an athletic event: (1) a copy of a physical- All students entering a sport must have a physical (2) athletic fee, and (3) parent permission slip.



You may obtain forms in the school office or from your coach or supervisor.

“The most important thing I can stress is GET INVOLVED! It will help you to meet lots of new people. My best activity was wrestling. Maybe yours will be jazz band, or student council. You’re not too old to try new things. Take a chance and be involved!”

Q: Will there be dances or fun nights?

A: Yes, these will be planned by the Student Council as well as other activities. All dances are lock-ins (meaning you can’t leave during the dance) and tickets must be bought in advance.

“The dances are super fun. There is music and dancing in one area and open gym in another. There is something for everyone.”



Health Information:

Q: What shots do I need to have for 7th grade?

A. State law requires that all 7th graders receive a second vaccination for MMR, a Tdap booster, a Hepatitis B series, a Meningococcal, and two Varicella, or history of chicken pox, documented by a physician if illness was after 2010. You will need to have these shots before you start 7th grade. Talk to your parents about getting these shots scheduled this summer if you haven’t already had them.

What is expected of me in the Classroom???



Q: How much HOMEWORK will I have?

A: You won't always have the same amount of homework every night. Some nights you won't have any, but once in a while you may have a lot. Of course, how well you do your work will make a difference too. It's a good idea to plan for one to two hours every school night, and if you don't have that much, you can either work ahead on a project due next week, read a book or just enjoy some extra free time!

Q: How will I keep track of what I have to do?

A: The best way to keep organized and on top of all of your work is to use your assignment notebook. **You will need to take it along to all classes** and write down what you are expected to

“Teachers usually give you time in class to do homework for the next day, so don't waste time in class. If you get your work done, you'll find you'll have a lot more time to talk to your friends or whatever else you want to do.”

do before the next day. A few minutes before the last bell rings, you can quickly check your assignment notebook and see what you'll have to grab from your locker to take home.

You can also check what homework you have by logging onto “Schoology”. This program will allow you to access upcoming assignments. You can also log on to “Infinite Campus” to check grades, attendance, etc. We will get you more information on how to use these programs during Back to School night.



Keep in mind, your responsibility increases dramatically in middle school such as keeping your things together and having with you what you're going to need. If you have trouble doing this, ask for help.

Q: What if I can't do an assignment because I don't understand it?

A: If you don't understand an assignment, **BE SURE TO TELL YOUR TEACHER either before school, before class, after class or after school.** If all else fails, write the teacher a note and hand it in when the assignment is collected. Again, most teachers are understanding and will try to help you if they know you're having problems, they are here to help you!

Q: What happens if I miss an assignment?

A: There are many good reasons why you might miss an assignment, such as a family emergency, illness, and so on. Most teachers are understanding IF you don't make a habit of just not doing your work. A note from a parent explaining the reason you couldn't do your work is also a good procedure. If you do have an acceptable reason, remember that it doesn't mean you never have to do the work. Get it in the next day, if possible.

Q: Will I have to save all the papers my teachers pass out?

A: Many of the papers you are given in class will be assignments to do or direction sheets. These hand-outs should be kept in a folder for the class in which you get them. (Again, color-coded folders and notebooks help your organization) Then when you need the papers, you'll have them. You should keep all the papers you're given in a file at home until the unit you're studying is over. Don't be too quick, though, to throw everything away. You may need some things in your folder all year long. When you are not sure, ask your teacher whether you should keep it or you can throw it away.

"When you stuff all your papers into the bottom of your locker, you'll probably never be able to find them when you need them. You'll end up with such a mess that your locker will jam closed. Keep your papers in folders which can be stacked sideways easily."

Q: How long are classes and how much time do we have to get to class?

A: Classes are each 53 minutes, except

Primetime which is only about 20 minutes. You have 5 minutes after each class to get to your next class.

Q: What is primetime?

A: Primetime is offered every day for about 20 minutes. Important information and announcements will be shared during Primetime. Some days you will be allowed to do homework, other days are for reading, some days are for fun activities, and one day a week is set aside for Second Step. You will get to know your primetime teacher very well during the year and can ask them questions about anything.



Q: When will I eat lunch?

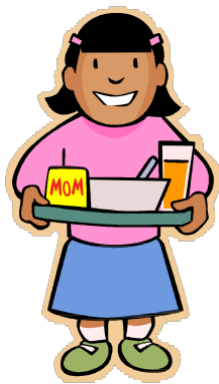
A: Lunch and Primetime are paired together to make one class period. Lunch is 30 minutes and Primetime is about 20 minutes long.

Q: Will I have to sit in a special spot in the lunchroom?

A: 6th graders will have the task of choosing tables in the lunchroom at the beginning of each quarter. You will remain at that table throughout the entire quarter during lunch. You will be able to sit, eat, and visit with friends. You won't have an assigned seat unless you choose not to follow the rules. Lunchroom supervisors will be available to answer questions and to maintain good behavior.

Q: What do I do if I don't want to eat lunch?

A: You will have to be in the lunchroom area even if you're not eating. You can still sit and talk to your friends who are eating lunch. Maybe, once in a while, it is okay to not eat, if you aren't feeling well, however food is energy to the brain. So if you don't eat, you won't be as ready to learn the rest of the day!



Q: What will I do when I am finished eating?

A: When you're finished eating, you must return your own tray, throw away litter, grab a washcloth, and wipe off your table. You are expected to stay at your table until excused. You will be excused when your table area is clean. Check with a lunchroom supervisor if you have any questions.

"If you try to leave your lunch tray or other garbage on the table, you'll end up cleaning your whole area. Also, don't leave a mess of food behind on the table."



Q: Where do I turn in my lunch money?

A: To deposit lunch money into your account, put your check in the box by the main office, sealed in an envelope with your name written on it. You must deposit your lunch money before 1st hr starts in order to have the money available for that day's lunch. To access your lunch money, you will be given a **PIN** number that you will type in after receiving a lunch. You usually will have two choices for lunch, plus ala carte. Your parents can also deposit lunch money through the Prior Lake website as well.

Q: What is ala carte?

A: Ala carte is separate from hot lunch and alternative lunch. They serve burgers, chicken strips, French fries, chips, pizza, Bosco sticks, and other various lunch items that can be purchased separately. Be careful when ordering a lot of ala carte items as they tend to add up fast.

Student Services Available

A counselor and a social worker are available to help students with academic, personal and social needs. For example, if you are having a conflict at home, at school, or with a friend you can go to the guidance office for help. If you would like to talk to a counselor, or social worker, please get a pass from your teacher. Listed below are several services that the middle school offers to help students be successful in school. Please see your counselor, social worker, or one of your teachers for more information on these services.

Student Support Groups meet during Prime Time. Support groups are designed to help students overcome issues they may be having while realizing they are not alone. Groups usually consist of 4-6 students who meet together each week to problem solve situations together.

The support groups we typically offer are for students experiencing changes and challenges due to: separation, divorce, remarriage in their families; students who want to work on self-esteem, social skills, navigating middle school, improving relationships and making personal changes; new student groups; grief group for students who have experienced the loss of a loved one.

A Final Note For Students

Q: I'm still really lost, and I'm really not sure about any of this. Who do I see if I have a problem or want something explained more?

A: The best person for you to see first is your primetime advisor. He or she is there to help you. A counselor is available to talk to you about any problems at school, home, with friends or with teachers. Any teacher, principal, or staff member will try to help you in some way or tell you what to do or who is the right person to talk to about your problem. There isn't a problem too small or too big!

“Primetime is a place and time to talk to your primetime teachers about problems. They can’t always fix everything, but they can tell you what your next step should be. Use your primetime to get the help and advice you need.”



NOTES: