

Welcome Back!

August 2021

Superintendent's News



Hay Springs Public School Return to Learn Plan 2021-22

This plan will address plans and procedures that we will follow at Hay Springs Public School while doing everything possible to keep our children and staff safe and healthy and yet address the desires you the parents/guardians have directed by our parent survey results from last year.

Our students will be back in school on a regular basis with as limited restrictions as possible. Our focus will be doing what we believe is necessary to keep everyone safe and healthy. The last thing that we want is to have any of our students, parents/guardians, staff or patrons of our community, ill with COVID because our students are back in school.

Currently there are concerns about the new variants, but as your superintendent, I truly believe that our students deserve to remain in school and receive person to person education. I am sure as school begins we will be having bi-weekly or weekly meetings with PPHD, the ESU #13 administrators, the Commissioner of Education and the Governor to receive guidance and create an ever changing plan if cases increase. We will continue as we did over the past year following guidance from Panhandle Public Health District. For that reason, this plan is going to be very general and allow for adjustments and changes as the circumstances in our school change. Know that as your superintendent I am working with my administrative team and the board of education in this process. I will make the best decisions that I can while following the guidance from PPHD. Know that the health of your children is my top priority. Having children back in school is not only my second priority, but I believe in person education is not only academically necessary but also beneficial to the health of our children. With these things in mind I will outline some of the precautionary measures we will be taking at Hay Springs School.

- Surfaces will be cleaned throughout the day using soap and water, followed with disinfectant and sanitizing material.
- Deep cleaning of classrooms will be conducted on a daily basis.
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of all transportation vehicles will take place after every use.
- Additional sanitizing dispensers will be utilized in the building for staff and students.
- Students will be instructed to wash their hands and utilize the hand sanitizer frequently throughout the day.
- All staff will be expected to assist the custodial staff in disinfecting and sanitizing the building throughout the day.

HEALTHY HABITS TO HELP PREVENT STUDENT ILLNESS

- Social distancing- keep your distance from others to protect them and you from getting sick.
- We have arranged classrooms to create the greatest possibilities for social distancing.
- PPE we support students and staff that choose to wear masks but it will be optional unless conditions change.
- All water fountains have been converted to fill water bottles. We will not have any drinking fountains.
- We will be having student classes/cohort in groups as much as possible to limit contact across the student population.
- Elementary will learn, eat, and attend their specials as one class.
- Middle school will learn, eat, and maintain in their classes/cohorts throughout the day.
- High school students will learn, eat and participate in activities as cohort as much as possible, with more mixed student involvement in the classroom and activities.

HEALTH AND SANITATION PROCEDURES

- Custodians will be receiving online training on building cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

PARENTS MUST SUPPORT KEEPING OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF SAFE BY SCREENING

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

STUDENTS AT HOME AND KEEPING STUDENTS WITH FEVERS OR ANY COVID SYMPTOMS HOME FROM SCHOOL.

Flu-like Symptoms include:

- Temperature above 100.4
- Difficulty Breathing, Sore Throat, Cough,
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Chills or headache
- Students exhibiting any of these symptom or if any member of the household has tested positive the student should remain home and please follow-up with your medical health provider.
- ANY STUDENT AT SCHOOL WITH A FEVER OR COVID SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL WILL BE SENT HOME IMMEDIATELY. WE REQUEST YOUR COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING THAT SENDING YOUR STUDENT HOME MAY NOT EVER BE CONVENIENT TO YOU AS PARENTS/GUARDIANS, BUT WE WILL NEED YOUR SUPPORT IN THIS PROCESS.

TRANSPORTATION

- All students should be screened at home before meeting the bus or coming to school
- Regular bus route
- Sanitize as they board the bus
- Load from the back to front
- Download front to back
- Wearing face masks will be supported by our staff but is totally optional
- Bus sanitized after each trip

ENTERING THE BUILDING

- Wearing of face masks will be supported by our staff but is totally optional.

ARRIVAL TIME

- Students are to arrive between 7:30 to 8:00 am NOT EARLIER THAN 7:30 AM.
- PLEASE UTILIZE THE STAFF PARKING LOT if necessary, there will be NO PARKING FROM 7:30 – 9:00AM or from 3:30 - 5:00 PM in the red marked curb area. This area is reserved

for safe student pickup and drop off area before and after school hours. This area is in the front of the building, from the cafeteria entrance door, to the Auditorium entrance door.

- Parallel parking for curbside student drop-off and pickup only in this area.
- When approaching the school from North 4th street please turn north and drop students off curbside on east side of the street.
- All students will enter the building THROUGH THE OFFICE ENTRANCE, between 7:30 and 8:00 am.
- Utilize hand sanitizer when entering the building.
- Practice social distancing whenever possible.
- PARENTS/GUARDIANS/GUESTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN THE BUILDING WITHOUT HAVING AN APPOINTMENT, WITH STAFF MEMBERS, PRIOR TO ARRIVAL.

STUDENT INSTRUCTION

- Face to face student instruction
- Three to six-foot distance as much as possible
- Wearing of Face mask will be supported but is totally optional (subject to change as deemed necessary)
- Continued compliance with IEP'S and 504 plans
- WE WILL BE CONDUCTING OUR "AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM"
- Please make arrangement to pick up your students at the end of the school day or at the end of the "AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM" to help prevent the number of contacts a student has on any given day.

FOOD SERVICE

- Hand washing and sanitizing before eating.
- Social distancing as much as possible, in the lunch line and while eating .
- No special meals with guests.
- Lunch will be served to classes/cohorts.

ACTIVITIES

- Attendance at school activities will be following NSAA guidelines
- Social distancing whenever possible
- Normal practice with focus on sanitation and safety

HAY SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOL

"HOME OF THE HAWKS"

P.O. BOX 280 * 407 N. BAKER STREET HAY SPRINGS, NEBRASKA 69347

Phone (308)638-4434 Fax (402)915-5126 www.hshawks.com

Mr. D. Russell Lechtenberg District Superintendent

Mr. Mark J. Hagge PK-12 Principal

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Dear Hay Springs School Community,

The start of a new school year, like the rising sun, reminds us that each day holds much promise. I trust the summer break allowed all of our families a chance to relax and recharge. As we prepare for the coming school year, I want to wish everyone a journey of great success filled with joy, hope and adventure. All our students have an opportunity to achieve their academic and activity goals. With hard work, perseverance and help from our dedicated educational team I am confident those goals will become a reality.

We will continue to focus on improving instruction and student learning, so our students experience a first-class education and graduate from Hay Springs Public School, college and career ready. I am looking forward to working with our faculty and staff on implementing our school improvement initiatives and our Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) to help our students SOAR to greater heights. We have much work to do, work that will require us to demonstrate compassion, determination, focus and collaboration to be successful. My hope and prayer is that our educational team and student body will view Hay Springs Public School as a place where learners of all ages explore, ask questions, make mistakes, discover solutions and do consequential work that matters in a safe environment. Moreover, with our school community's continued support, I envision a school culture that helps our students develop the roots and wings necessary to make a positive difference in our world today.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the front office at (308)638-4434. Please continue to regularly check our district's webpage www.hshawks.com or Facebook page for more back to school announcements. To receive "Remind" text messages parents/guardians need to contact the front office to get signed up.

With Much Hawk Pride,

Mark J. Hagge



New Faces at HSPS

I want to take this opportunity to welcome our new staff members to our Hay Springs community and particular to our Hay Springs educational system.

Mr. Ginkens—Ag Education Teacher

Hello, I'm, Trevor Ginkens! I am currently in my third year of teaching agriculture and shop. I was at Mullen High School for two years and will start my first year teaching at Hay Springs. I am from Harrison, Nebraska originally and grew up on a famioy ranch. I recently got married in October of 2020, to my best friend Grayce and we have two dogs named Walt and Ferg.

I graduated high school from Sioux County High School in 2015. I then went to and graduated from Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis, Nebraska in 2017 with my associates Degree in Animal Production Systems with a major in Agricultural Education. I then transferred to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and completed my Bachelor's Degree in Agricultural Education with majors in Agriculture Education (teaching option) and Cooperative Education.

In my spare time I like to go help on the ranch, rope, golf, and hunt and fish.

Mrs. Johnson—Head Cook

For those of you that don't know me, my name is Kendra Johnson. My husband and I live South of Hay Springs on the family farm along with our 3 children. I am a 2007 graduate of Hay Springs High School and have worked in various positions in Healthcare since graduation. I love spending time with my children, family and friends. I'm excited to start this new journey at Hay Springs Public Schools as Head Cook.

Mrs. VanValkenberg—Assistant Cook

Hi, I'm Maci Van Valkenberg . I've been married for 17 years and have two beautiful girls Aria 7 and Aaliyah 17. We just bought our first home in Hay Springs in January. I'm pretty relaxed and love the country life, watching movies and traveling. Happy to be apart of the Hay Springs community.



**HOMEcoming IS SET TO TAKE PLACE THE WEEK
OF SEPTEMBER 13TH—18TH STAY TUNED FOR
DETAILS!**

Mandatory Concussion Meeting

Linda Kudrna



Wednesday, August 3rd there will be a Mandatory Meeting on Concussion Awareness in the auditorium at 6:30 pm for all athletes in grades 7-12 and their parents. All paperwork for extracurricular activities will be available and participation fees can be paid at this time. The fees are as follows: \$65.00 for middle school and \$75.00 for high school participants. Fall practice will begin on August 9th. We ask that all paperwork and fees be paid by this date. Help spread the word!

Remind Information

Remind is an easy way to receive notifications regarding important information right on your phone. Hay Springs Schools has two main groups of remind, Hawk Parent/Student Notices and Hawk Activity Time Changes. Hawk Parent/Student Notices notifies you of information that is geared at the entire school (e.g. late starts, snow days) and Hawk Activity Time Changes is geared at athletic parents and students (e.g. event time changes or cancellations). Please make sure to sign up for one or the other, or both so you don't miss important information!!



College Planning

Educational Planning Programs coming to our area: Follow this link for that information and much more regarding college planning. It is never too early to start!

<http://www.educationquest.org/educational-planning-programs/>

BAND DRIVE

HAY SPRINGS BAND IS NOW ACCEPTING USED INSTRUMENTS DONATIONS

Bus Route Driver and Custodian Needed

Hay Springs Public Schools has an immediate opening for a School Bus Route Driver and Custodian. Bus drivers must have a valid Commercial Driver's License with Passenger Endorsements and pass random drug testing as needed. For more information contact Russell Lechtenberg or the school office at (308)638-4434.

Notices

ASBESTOS UPDATE: Notice is hereby given by Hay Springs Public Schools District #3, Sheridan County, Nebraska, that Asbestos Management Plan for said school is on file in the administrative offices of each school. PGE has examined all buildings of said school and the results and recommendations of said inspection are included in the Management Plan. All materials containing asbestos shall receive periodic surveillance and shall be re-inspected each six months and each three years. Response actions as recommended in the Management Plan have been completed for abatement and re-insulation.

USDA NOTICE

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



August 3rd—Mandatory Parent/Student Concussion Awareness

August 9th—First Day of Fall Practice

August 9th—Teachers' First Day

August 11th—Back to School Night

August 12th—PreK—12th Students' First Day—Regular Day for All Grades

Aug 26th—29th—Friendly Festival

September 6th—NO SCHOOL (Labor Day)

September 13th—September 17th—HOMECOMING WEEK

Hay Springs Public School Beef to Hot Lunch Program Proud Supporters

Security First Bank, Hay Springs Branch
Zach Kraenow Cattle Company
S & V Livestock Registered Angus, Don and Mary Vannatta
Marcy Cattle Company
BNSF Railway
Sheridan Livestock Auction Company
Hoos Cow, Judd and Brandy Hoos
Whispering Winds Vineyard, Russell and Sue Lechtenberg
KDK Meats Bridgeport, Nebraska
Sandhills State Bank
Hinn Ranch, Tess Hinn
Lipps Cattle Company, Art and Carolyn Lipps
Heiting Cattle Company, Greg and Megan Heiting
EJ Frink and Family
Smith Farms, Lynden and Alisa Smith
Gary and Brant Binger

*Thank
You*

Nebraska

Beef in Schools



*Promoting Nebraska beef
for school's lunch program
& encouraging beef education
and nutrition throughout
Nebraska schools.*



Hay Springs Public Schools is looking for donors for our Beef/Pork To School Lunch Program for the 2021-22 school year. If interested please contact the school office at 308-638-4434.

August 2021



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
				Breakfast Pizza/Fruit Tacos/Corn		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	French Toast Sticks Sausage/ Fruit Chicken Patty Sand/Green Beans 1	Biscuits and Gravy/Fruit Tator Tot Casserole/Peas/Rol	Omelette Toast/Banana Corn Dogs/Baked Beans	Breakfast Pizza/Fruit BTS Burger/FF		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Cereal/Yogurt/Fruit Chicken Nuggets/Mac-n- cheese/Peas	Biscuits and Gravy/Fruit Spaghetti/Garlic Bread/Green Beans	Pancake Sausage on a Stick/Fruit Ham Sandwich/Sweet Potato Fry	Breakfast Pizza/Fruit Breaded Beef Patty/Mashed Potatoes/Gravy/Rol		
29	30	31				
	French Toast Tornado/Fruit Orange Chicken Rice/Fortune Cookie	Biscuits and Gravy/Fruit Burritos/Corn				
NOTES: Breakfast is served from 7:30 a.m. to 7:55 a.m.						



Hay Springs School Cafeteria

*Breakfast Menus

* PK - 12 Grade Lunch Menus

* All menus are served with milk. Water is available in the lunchroom area.
* In addition to the item on the Menu, There will be a choice of Chef Salad or PB&J meals daily.
* A Veggie and fruit Bar will be available daily.
* Menus are subject to change without notice.



August 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Mandatory Parent/Student Concussion Awareness 6:30 pm	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 Teacher In-service First Day of Practice	10 Teacher In-service	11 Teacher In-service Back To School Night 4:30 - 6:00	12 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (FULL DAY- EVERYONE)	13	14
15	16 VB Jamboree @ Chadron	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 JH/HS XC @ Scottsbluff 3:45 pm Friendly Festival	27 *HS VB hm. vs Creek Valley 4 pm *HS FB hm. vs Creek Valley 7pm	28
29	30	31 *HS VB Tri. hm. vs. Banner Co. & Garden Co. 4pm	1	2 Heath Screening JH VB @ St. Agnes 4pm	3 JH/HS XC @ Gering 11 am	4
5	6 Labor Day No School					



STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

PARENT GUIDANCE

In the event of a live incident, parents may have questions about their role.

SECURE

"Get Inside. Lock outside doors"



Secure is called when there is something dangerous outside of the building. Students and staff are brought into the building and the outside doors will be locked. The school might display the Building is Secured poster on entry doors or nearby windows. Inside, it will be business as usual.

SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A SECURE EVENT?

Probably not. Every effort is made to conduct classes as normal during a secure event. Additionally, parents may be asked to stay outside during a Secure event.

WHAT IF PARENTS NEED TO PICK UP THEIR STUDENT?

Depending on the situation, it may not be safe to release the student. As the situation evolves, Secure might change to a Monitored Entry and/or Controlled Release.

WILL PARENTS BE NOTIFIED WHEN A SCHOOL GOES INTO SECURE?

When a secure event is brief or the hazard is non-violent, like a wild animal on the playground, there may not be a need to notify parents while the Secure is in place.

With longer or more dangerous events, the school should notify parents that the school has increased their security.

LOCKDOWN

"Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"



A Lockdown is called when there is something dangerous inside of the building. Students and staff are trained to enter or remain in a room that can be locked, and maintain silence.

A Lockdown is only initiated when there is an active threat inside or very close to the building.

SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A LOCKDOWN?

The natural inclination for parents is to go to the school during a Lockdown. Understandable, but perhaps problematic. If there is a threat inside the building, law enforcement will be responding. It is unlikely that parents will be granted access to the building or even the campus. If parents are already in the school, they will be instructed to Lockdown as well.

SHOULD PARENTS TEXT THEIR STUDENTS?

The school recognizes the importance of communication between parents and students during a Lockdown event. Parents should be aware though, during the initial period of a Lockdown, it may not be safe for students to text their parents. As the situation resolves, students may be asked to update their parents on a regular basis.

In some cases, students may be evacuated and transported off-site for a student-parent reunification.

WHAT ABOUT UNANNOUNCED DRILLS?

The school may conduct unscheduled drills, however it is highly discouraged to conduct one without announcing that it as a drill. That's called an unannounced drill and can cause undue concern and stress.

Parents should recognize that the school will always inform students that it is a drill during the initial announcement.

It's important to differentiate between a **drill** and an exercise. A drill is used to create the "Muscle Memory" associated with a practiced action. There is no simulation of an event; this is simply performing the action. An exercise simulates an actual event to test the capacity of personnel and equipment.

CAN PARENTS OBSERVE OR PARTICIPATE IN THE DRILLS?

The school welcomes parents who wish to observe or participate in drills.



2021-22 Academic Year Calendar												
Hay Springs Public Schools												
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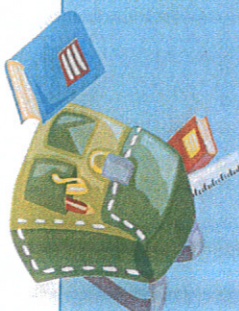
2020-21 FEES/PRICE LIST

ADMISSION PRICES AND PARTICIPATION FEES

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Varsity Events				
Adult	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Senior Citizen	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
Student (K-12)	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
Pre-Kindergarten	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
JV or Jr. High Events				
Adult	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
Senior Citizen	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
Student (K-12)	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
Pre-Kindergarten	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Passes -Family Pass includes: Parents and students 0-12th grades residing in the same household.				
Family Pass	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Adult Pass	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00
Student Pass (K-12)	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00
Participation Fees (includes free admission to home activities)				
High School	\$65.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00
Middle School	\$55.00	\$65.00	\$65.00	\$65.00
<u>LUNCH PRICES</u>				
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Hot Lunch Meal				
Adult	\$3.50	\$3.65	\$3.65	\$3.65
6 th – 12 th Grades	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25
PK-5 th Grades	\$2.75	\$2.75	\$2.75	\$2.75
Breakfast PK-12th Grades	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.75
Adult	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$2.25
Seconds/Extras				
Main Dish	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
Dessert	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.50
Milk	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40
<u>OTHER FEES</u>				
		2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Elementary Supplies				\$25.00
Copies				
Black & White		\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.50
Color Copies		\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
Lamination				
Any width	\$2.00/linear foot			



Hay Springs School District #3 2021-22 Pre K - 12th School Supply List



PRESCHOOL AM & PM

- ☐ 1 regular backpack, labeled with student's name
- ☐ Gym Shoes with non-marking soles (labeled)
- ☐ Extra change of clothing (labeled)
- ☐ 1-75 count container of Clorox Wipes
- ☐ 1 composition notebook (labeled)
- ☐ 1 - 3 ring binder (labeled)

KINDERGARTEN, 1ST, 2ND, 3RD, 4TH, & 5TH GRADE

- ☐ \$25 - paid to Hay Springs Public Schools; due on the first day school
- ☐ Backpack, labeled with student's name
- ☐ Water Bottle that closes (labeled)
- ☐ Gym shoes with non-marking soles (labeled)
- ☐ 1 box of Kleenex (do not label)
- ☐ 1 - 75 count container of Clorox Wipes (do not label)
- ☐ Kindergarten Only - Extra set of clothing (labeled)
- ☐ 1st through 5th Grade - Ear buds or headphones (labeled)
- ☐ 5th Grade Only - 24 count pencils (wood or mechanical) Refill lead if buying mechanical

PRESCHOOL & ELEMENTARY NOTICE

- Label all supplies (except those marked as do not label) with student's name in permanent marker.
- Send supplies in on the first day of school.
- Please do not purchase items unless indicated.
- **25\$ owed to Hay Springs School due the first day of school for supplies.**

6TH-8TH GRADE

- ☐ 2 - 2" 3 ring binder
- ☐ Pens (red, black, blue)
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ 2 - Notebook
- ☐ Headphones
- ☐ 2 - Graph Paper notebook
- ☐ Simple Calculator
- ☐ Highlighters (blue, green, yellow, pink)

9TH-12TH GRADE

- ☐ 2 - 3x5 packs of note cards
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Glue stick
- ☐ Protractor
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ Physical education classes require gym shoes, gym clothes, and gym bag
- ☐ Calculator (TI-83)
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Lined Notebooks
- ☐ Graph Paper notebook
- ☐ Binder (2" or larger) 3 ring
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Highlighters
- ☐ Markers (8 count thick or thin)
- ☐ Markers (Black extra fine sharpie)
- ☐ Protractor
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ Geometry - Bound book of notecards
- ☐ Physical Education Classes - gym shoes, gym clothes, and gym bag

Home & School

CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

Hay Springs Public Schools
Ms. Kim Marx, Director Of Social Emotional Learning

SHORT NOTES

Exercise your brain

Your child's brain is like a muscle—the more he uses it, the stronger it will become. Suggest that he give his brain a workout with activities like using his nondominant hand to throw a ball or to color. Learning to speak a foreign language or play a musical instrument are also known brain boosters.

DID YOU KNOW?

Children who regularly eat meals with their families tend to do better in school

and avoid risky behavior. Eating dinner together is great, but other meals count, too. If you work at night, maybe you could make time for a family breakfast. Or on a weekend, try a picnic lunch.

Celebrate progress

Suggest that your youngster create a fun reminder of all the things she has accomplished. Let her cover a box with construction paper and label it "I did it!" Then, she can write each success ("I learned to add fractions") on a slip of paper and put it in the box. If she's feeling discouraged, have her read the slips.

Worth quoting

"The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up!"
Mark Twain

JUST FOR FUN

Q: Can a kangaroo jump higher than the Empire State Building?

A: Of course. The Empire State Building can't jump!



Conversations about school

When you think of parent involvement, do you picture moms and dads volunteering in classrooms? That's one way to help—but research shows that supporting your child's education at home is even more important. Here are conversation starters that will help you stay involved.

"Let's see what you worked on today."

Look at completed work to find out what your youngster is learning and how well she's doing. You could comment on her math work or social studies project, for instance. ("You know a lot about our state's history!") Also, respond to notes from her teacher, and sign her weekly folder or daily planner if required.

"Show me what you have for homework."

It's your child's job to do her homework, but you play a role, too. Make sure she knows what she's supposed to do by having her explain the assignments to you. After she finishes her homework, glance over the work to see that it's complete.

"Describe a book you enjoyed today."

This gives you an idea of what your youngster prefers to read. Then, build a daily reading habit by asking what she'd like to read tonight. Encourage her reading and listening skills by reading aloud to her and letting her read to you.

"Tell me what you learned that you'd like to know more about."

Use her interests as jumping-off points for activities to share. If she likes geometry, you might hunt for



shapes together. If she's fascinated by how animals adapt to winter, read a book or observe animals outside. ♥

After-school questions

Asking "How was school today?" might not get you far. Instead, ask questions like these for a better picture of your youngster's day:

- "What's the coolest thing that happened today?"
- "Pretend you're the teacher. How would you describe the day?"
- "What made you laugh?"
- "What was the most creative thing you did?"
- "How were you kind or helpful today? How was someone kind or helpful to you?" ♥



Middle Years

Working Together for School Success



Short Stops

Waiting patiently

Does your child expect everything to happen now? If a friend doesn't call back immediately or his teacher hasn't graded his project yet, encourage him to come up with possible explanations. Maybe his friend is watching a movie or the teacher has 100 assignments to grade. Thinking reasonably can help him be patient.

Digital moods

Tweens may not be aware of how electronic devices affect their moods. Encourage your middle grader to notice how she feels when she's online. For instance, a virtual pottery-making app might be relaxing. But a drama-filled group chat could stress her out. Suggest that she stick to activities that make her feel good—online and in real life.

DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows that most tweens would like to talk more with their parents about schoolwork. Ask your middle grader to share what he's learning in his classes. Be specific: "What did you work on in science today?" or "Tell me about the book you discussed in English today."

Worth quoting

"The time is always right to do what is right." *Martin Luther King Jr.*

Just for fun

Q: When does Friday come before Thursday?

A: In the dictionary!



Hints for homework

Maddy has her evening planned. She'll do her math homework before dinner, then follow up dessert with French and history. Afterward, she can unwind from a busy day.

Sound impossible? It's not. Help your middle grader make homework go like clockwork with these strategies.

Think it through

Before your youngster begins, have her make a to-do list. *Example:* write a poem, read history chapter, solve 10 math problems. Then, suggest that she number the tasks, from toughest to easiest, and start with the hard stuff. This "save the easiest for last" strategy will help her finish on a high note, perhaps inspiring her to get in some extra studying.

Think about time

Ask your child to consider different time slots she can use to get work done. For instance, maybe she could set aside a weekend morning or Sunday night.



Also, some middle graders have time during study period or after lunch to tackle homework. Encourage your child to complete one assignment during school hours each day. The more she does then, the more time she'll have for fun later.

Think positive

Help your middle grader see homework as a chance to prove her independence by getting her work done on time and doing it by herself. Boost her confidence by telling her, "Homework gives you a chance to show all that you know." And give her a thumbs-up when she does just that. 👍

Be there!

Being on time for every class, every day helps your child get the most out of middle school. Encourage good attendance with these ideas:

- Point out that there is no substitute for being in class, whether in school or online. Your youngster needs to be present to hear teachers explain concepts, to participate in group projects and class discussions, and to ask questions.

- Schedule doctor, dentist, and orthodontist appointments for before or after school hours whenever possible. If you can't, try to arrange them for lunchtime.

- It will be easier for your child to get up on time for school if he has had at least nine hours of sleep. Set a reasonable bedtime, and make sure he puts away his phone or video games so he isn't tempted to stay awake and use them. 👍

