LEBANON MIDDLE SCHOOL

PARENT GUIDEBOOK

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A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FOR SIXTH GRADE PARENTS
AND PARENTS OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

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Welcome to Lebanon Middle School. We are excited to guide you through your transition from elementary. Here at LMS, achievement is our expectation for all students! We believe in providing experiences in academics, music programs, drama opportunities, activities, and athletics. We expect and foster a safe atmosphere that promotes personalized learning while encouraging self-expression. Our teachers and support staff work as cooperative teams to support student learning in all facets of education. We invite and encourage the community and parents to assist us on this journey.

The vision of the Lebanon School District is to challenge students to develop their skills as lifelong learners and responsible citizens. Lebanon Middle School will provide an educational experience that will foster this goal by helping to prepare students for future success. It is our goal to prepare Lebanon School District students to rely on their strong sense of character, enabling them to make ethical decisions in an ever-changing world.

The Lebanon Middle School professional staff is responsible for delivering a well-rounded curriculum that meets the needs of all students. This curriculum has been designed as a continuation of the elementary curriculum with the Pennsylvania Common Core as the guide. Student learning will be assessed formally and informally throughout their learning experience and our assessments drive our instructional goals and programming.

We share the responsibility and vision for improving student academic performance and achievement. Lebanon Middle School staff, families, and community will continue to build and develop a partnership that will enable our children to achieve the state’s high standards. We commit to communication with our families as it is at the heart of a successful organization. We invite all of our families to continue to be involved with their child’s education and welcome their feedback and ideas!

Dawn R. Connelly

Middle School Principal
MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCEPT

What is meant by middle school?

An effective middle school program is designed around the unique developmental needs of early adolescents (11 - 14 year olds). Because the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional needs of this age group are different from either elementary or high school students, a customized educational program is needed. The middle school is a bridge between elementary school and high school. It is the time when many students find their directions in life. The middle school experience is an essential building block for life long learners.

GROUPING

How are students placed in academic classes?

It is our desire to correctly place each sixth grader in appropriate academic classes. Information is gathered through fifth grade teacher recommendations, grades, and standardized testing. Math and language arts classes are grouped by ability in grades six, seven, and eight. Other CORE classes and CATS classes are organized heterogeneously by grade.

What is a CORE class?

CORE classes include language arts, math, social studies, and science classes.

What is CATS?

CATS is our creative arts program. It includes music, art, computer, and physical education.

SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

What are the general services offered by the counselors?

School counseling services are offered at the middle school in a variety of areas including: academic counseling, career exploration and information, parent relationships, peer relationships, conflict resolution, teacher-student relationships, study skills, and group testing. Additional services are offered to students with high absenteeism and low grades. Students who need to see a counselor should have a pass from their teacher or fill out a request form in the counselors’ office.
**What is provided to help students deal with age-related problems such as peer pressure and self-esteem?**

Our school counselors are available at all times to help students with their problems. This counseling is done individually and in small groups. A special attempt is made to help students develop a more positive self-image which will contribute to responsible choices. The aim is to enhance the coping skills of young people and to teach them to use those skills in their daily lives.

In addition to individual services, school counselors teach group guidance lessons several times throughout the year. These lessons focus on a variety of areas, including bullying, peer relationships, school attendance, study skills, and other social skills.

The school also has a volunteer group of students that form the Blue Hand Group. This group operates like a school club and is open to all students. The aim of the group is to stop bullying and support victims of bullying in the middle school. Applications are available in the school counselors’ office at the beginning of the school year.

**MEDICAL SERVICES**

**What grades have physical and dental exams?**

Grade 6 students have physical exams, and grade 7 students have dental exams.

**What grades get vision and hearing screening?**

Seventh grade students get hearing tests. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders also get a vision test. Teachers and parents may request either one for a child at any time if there seems to be a problem.

**Why is scoliosis screening done and in what grades?**

Grade 7 in the middle school is screened for scoliosis. Scoliosis is the medical term for a lateral curvature of the spine. This curve may become more pronounced during a rapid growth period. While permission slips are not sent home in the middle school, a student may bring a note from home requesting not to be screened.

**Are medications administered by the nurse?**

Yes. In fact, any medication which a child takes during the school day MUST be administered by the nurse. Prescription medication may be administered to students providing written doctors orders are provided in the original container with the student’s name, dosage, and time of medication. Written parental permission must also be provided. This includes aspirin or Tylenol as well as other over the counter medications. **It is important to know that children are NOT permitted to carry medication with them during the day. The nurse must dispense all medications**
My child has a specific medical condition, and I want the nurse and teachers to be aware of it. What should I do?

We recommend you call the nurse and talk to her personally about this. She will relay the information to teachers and principals. It is very important that you do this.

THE SCHEDULE

When does school begin and end?

Students must be in their homeroom seats by 8:00 AM. Dismissal time is 2:40 PM.

What time should my child arrive at school?

Students should arrive at school between 7:50 - 8:00 AM. Doors open for non-breakfast students at 7:55am. Students who choose to attend breakfast may enter from 7:25-7:45am.

What happens if my child is late for school?

Students must be in their homeroom seats by 8:00 AM, or they will be considered tardy. Tardy students must report to the front desk at the main door for a late slip. Continued tardiness could result in fines to the parents.

LUNCH

Cafeteria Procedures

All students in the Lebanon School District will get Universal Free breakfast and lunch. (All students must utilize Point of Sale System for appropriate District subsidy credit.)

Is breakfast served at the school?

Breakfast is served between 7:25 - 7:45 AM. Students eating breakfast in the cafeteria must use the Weimer Street door. Breakfast is offered free to all Lebanon School District students.

LOCKERS

What is the purpose of having a locker?

This is a safe place where each student can put books, notebooks, coats, and gym clothes. It allows students not to have to carry all of their belongings from class to class. The only locks that are allowed are school issued locks.
Should students share their locker combinations with other students?

No! This leads to many problems. Each student has his or her own locker and a combination lock. There is no reason for giving another student the combination to their lock or sharing lockers. Students are responsible for all items that are in their locker. The cost of a replacement lock is $10.00.

How often can sixth graders go to their lockers?

The students may go to their locker three times per day: before school, before lunch and before going home at the end of the day. Students may go to their locker at other times with a teacher’s permission.

DRESS CODE

Is there a dress code at the middle school?

Yes. The Dress Code will be consistent throughout all grades at our middle school. Lebanon School District POLICY #214.

Violation of Dress Code will result in disciplinary measures.
1) Warning/change clothing/parent notification
2) Detention to Suspension

HOMEWORK/ACADEMIC SUPPORT

How does homework differ from elementary school?

When students enter the middle school, homework becomes a very important part of their program. At this age, students will be expected to work more independently. A student planner is provided for all students to write down their assignments each day.

What constitutes homework?

Homework will naturally vary from class to class. For example, in a math class, a student may have a specific daily assignment in which a certain number of problems are to be completed each day. For another class, homework may involve studying for a spelling or unit test over a two or three day period. Other examples could extend over the period of a month. Your child should always have a novel which he or she should be reading. They can check a book out from the school library or public library. In addition, local bookstores carry age appropriate books which can be purchased.

All assignments should be listed in the student planner by the student.
How much time should a student in the middle school be expected to spend on homework?

The staff recommends 15 to 20 minutes per subject each evening for grade levels 6 through 8 which means that your child should have approximately an hour of homework each night. This suggestion reflects an average nightly time required for the average student.

How can parents help their child in making homework a positive and worthwhile experience?

Establishment of a daily routine for homework has proven to be important. Also, it can be important for parents to check over their child’s work from time to time to provide support and encouragement. Homework provides an opportunity for the student to review and practice skills.

How can I get extra academic help for my child?

Your child can get extra help by working with LMS teachers and arranging a plan to stay after school. Teachers and mentors are available and willing to help students stay on top of their school work and provide instructional support for areas that they are struggling to master. At anytime during the school year, teachers, counselors, and administrators are available to set up a meeting to create a plan and arrange after school meetings that will benefit your child’s academic learning.

STUDENT PLANNER

What is the student planner and how will it be used?

The planner is a spiral bound assignment calendar which will be given to each student on the first day of school. As soon as an assignment is given, each student is responsible for recording the correct information in the appropriate space. Teachers will sign the planner to verify homework assignments if the student makes this request to them after class or after school. Replacement cost of a new assignment calendar is $3.00.

Why is this planner an asset to my child?

With new surroundings, new teachers, and new classes, sixth graders sometimes find the first few weeks of school are a bit overwhelming. The planner is one more method by which students may improve their organizational skills and become oriented academically.
How is the planner important to me as a parent?

It will keep you informed of the material being covered in each class. In addition, you will be able
to determine what homework, if any, your child has for the following day. Teachers recommend
that you - as a parent - review the planner with your child each night.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Will my child be able to carry a back pack or book bag during the school day?

No. Students may not carry book bags or back packs during the school day. These may be stored
in lockers for use before and after school. Bags can be purchased in the office ($2 –mesh bags $5
nylon bags). SMALL bags (such as a plastic grocery bag) may be used on gym days only and may
only contain gym clothes. Acceptable bags are plastic grocery bags, mesh or nylon bags NO
LARGER that 15 x 18. Please note that book bags on wheels do NOT fit into the student lockers.

What other supplies should my child have available?

Some of the other suggested supplies that you may want to have at home include:
highlighters  3-hole punch  dictionary  stapler
pencils  notebook paper  markers  Book Sox
tape  ruler  Post-Its  binder
crayons  colored pencils  index cards  pens (blue or black)

ABSENCES

What if my child is absent from school?

Students are required to bring a signed note from the parent and turn it in to the office before 8:00
AM on the day the student returns. Notes not turned in to the office within three days of the
absence will become unlawful absences. A maximum of ten parent notes may be used in one
academic school year. Doctor notes that are turned in within the three day window will always
be accepted.

If my child is sick or has an excused absence, is s/he allowed to make-up
assignments?

Yes. In fact, each student is required to make up missed work. Your child should see his or her
teachers to find out what work must be made up.
What if my child misses days due to a trip or family emergency?

When requesting days missed for family educational experiences, a written notice to the building principal is required one week prior to the trip. Forms are available in the office. Permission will be granted based on the student’s academic standing. If you foresee a lengthy absence, contact the school counselors’ office to arrange for assignments to be picked up in advance.

What if my child needs an early dismissal?

Early dismissal from school requires a written request from the family. Phone requests for early dismissals will not be accepted. This practice is for the student’s protection. This request must be submitted to the office before 8:00 AM on the day of the early dismissal.

At early dismissal time, the student must report to the office until the parent arrives to pick up the student.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

What clothing is needed for phys. ed. class?

The following items are required:
   a. gym shorts - different from shorts worn to school
   b. T-shirt - different from top worn to school
   c. sneakers

Are students required to dress for physical education class?

Yes, proper dress for phys. ed. class is similar to having necessary supplies in other classes.

Are students required to take showers?

Showers are not required, but are available for daily use.

Do students go outside for physical education?

Yes, classes attempt to stay outside as long as weather permits. Sweatsuits may be worn over their regular physical education clothes on cool days.
REPORT CARDS

How often do students get report cards? How are they sent home?

Students get computerized grade reports six times a year. These will be sent home with the students at the end of each grading period. These dates are included on the district calendar which is available on the district website. Final grades count toward promotion or retention.

What is the grading system?

The grading system adopted by the Lebanon School District is as follows:

- 90 - 100 = A  
- 80 - 89 = B  
- 70 - 79 = C  
- 60 - 69 = D  
- Below 60 = F

- P – Pass = 100%  
- F – Failure = 59%

What grades are needed to qualify for the honor roll?

Students qualify for the superior honor roll if they receive all A’s and P’s. Students qualify for the honor roll if they receive all A’s, B’s and P’s. Students qualify for honorable mention if they receive all A’s, B’s, P’s, and only one C.

PARENT CONFERENCES

When are teachers available to meet with parents?

In order to make an appointment to meet with a teacher, contact the teacher directly or the school counselors’ office to set up a meeting. You may also send a note with your child to the teacher requesting a conference. Remember to include your phone number.

Are there parent conference days like those in elementary school?

The Lebanon Middle School has set aside two days in October and two days in January for parent conferences.

TRANSITIONING BETWEEN CLASSES

How much time will students have to pass from class to class? If a student is late, what happens?

The amount of passing time between classes is determined by the classroom teachers and how far the student needs to go. At the middle school, CATS classes are clustered in the same hallway. This also helps students get to class quickly. Students are tardy for classes occasionally for a good reason, and these are excused. A student who is repeatedly tardy to class could receive consequences.
DISCIPLINE

What is the middle school philosophy on discipline?

Good behavior is obviously a prerequisite for creating a climate that is safe, clean, and conducive to learning. Good discipline is necessary to support our belief that every teacher has a right to teach, and every student has a right to learn.

As a parent, how do I know what the middle school rules and consequences are?

Each student is given a Student Handbook on the first day of school and the information is also in the student planners. This booklet contains a variety of information and should be read by all parents. All parents should review this important document with their child. This will prevent the phrase, “I didn’t know that was against the rules.”

How are students made aware of the rules and consequences?

Teachers and administration meet with the students during the first few days of school to review the student handbook. Offenses are explained through the use of appropriate examples. Students are responsible for reading the handbook thoroughly and being familiar of the rules and consequences of Lebanon Middle School.

If my child does get into trouble, does this go into a file that follows him/her to the next grade or to high school?

Yes, an anecdotal record is maintained on each student and is passed on to the next grade.

Do classroom teachers have rules and consequences of their own?

Yes, a discipline plan is used by all classroom teachers. It is our belief that an orderly school atmosphere is most conducive to learning. To this end, we have developed a discipline policy that deals with inappropriate behavior in a progressive fashion. Minor misbehavior is best handled by the classroom teacher. All teachers have rules that students are held accountable by applying appropriate consequences. These are clearly reviewed with students periodically.

Teachers utilize student conferences, parent contact, after-school detention, and a variety of other disciplinary tools to enforce these rules on a consistent basis. Students who persist in violating classroom rules are referred to the a building administrator, usually a principal or assistant principal.
AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION

Can sixth grade students be assigned after-school detention by a teacher?

Yes, any middle school student can be assigned after-school detention by a teacher. This type of consequence is given by the classroom teacher for inappropriate behavior. It is an alternative to being sent to the office for discipline. Sometimes, however, the after-school detention is not assigned for discipline but for not completing homework or assignments. In such cases, the student is kept after school to complete the missing work. All assigned after-school detention is for the next school day so that families can arrange plans accordingly.

What is school detention? School detention is an after-school detention assigned by an administrator. Parents will be notified one day in advance of any detention. Students who receive school detention will be given a referral paper which should be taken home to the parent as notification of the assigned detention.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

What is the school’s policy on dangerous items?

Weapons, replica weapons, and other dangerous instruments are forbidden in school buildings and school buses and on school property owned by, leased by, or under control of the Lebanon School District. In addition, all such items are forbidden at any school sponsored/related function, regardless of location.

Weapons shall include any loaded or unloaded firearm (including pellet guns, BB guns, and look-alike firearms), any kind of explosive device, any kind of knife, or any other tool, instrument, or substance fashioned with the intent to use, sell, harm, threaten, or harass students, staff members, parents, or any other visitor, guest or patron of the school. Any student found in possession of a weapon, regardless of intent, will be reported to his/her parent(s) and the police. The student will be placed on an out of school suspension and presented to the Board for a formal hearing in accord with the provisions of Policy 233.

In general, a student found in possession of a weapon will be expelled from school for a period of not less than one year. The Board may, however, modify the expulsion period on a case-by-case basis.

What other types of items are restricted?

Items that are not conducive to learning or can cause health or safety problems will not be permitted in the middle school. Some of those items include, but are not limited to: permanent markers, white out, rubber cement, aerosol containers, glass containers, cutting devices, perfume/cologne, playing cards, dice, lighter, matches.

Electronic devices such as pagers, cell phones, beepers, etc. must be turned off when entering the building and stored in the student’s locker. Students who violate this policy will be required to turn over the item to administration. A parent will need to come to school to pick up the item.

Please note that the school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
GREEN ZONE/REWARD SYSTEM

Does the Lebanon Middle School have a school-wide incentive program?

Yes. The Lebanon Middle School recognizes students that meet behavioral expectations. Students are matched up with staff members who serve as mentors. Twice a month students will meet with their mentors to discuss character building, social skills, and/or review recent behavior records. At the start of every month, students who meet behavior criteria are rewarded with a VIP (Very Important Person) card. This card will entitled them to special privileges throughout the month, such privileges may include a movie, school-wide recognition, special lunch arrangements, early dismissal to lunch or lockers, LMS lottery tickets, and more.

Lebanon Middle School also uses a school-wide lottery ticket system. Students are rewarded with a lottery ticket from LMS staff. All students are eligible to receive tickets, and the tickets are handed out randomly for students performing good tasks. When a student receives a ticket, they place their name and team on the ticket and place it in a bucket. Student names are pulled for many prizes, including school supplies, special classroom privileges, cedar gear, school art projects, breakfast with a principal, and many others.

BULLYING

Does the Lebanon School District have a policy on bullying?

Yes. The Lebanon School District has adopted a policy on bullying. The School Board prohibits all forms of bullying behavior on school property, in school vehicles, at school-sponsored events, or during travel to and from school. Any violation of this policy shall be considered an infraction of the Student Code of Conduct, with discipline implemented accordingly. All bullying behavior that is a violation of the PA Crimes Code will be reported to the police.

What is considered bullying?

Under this policy, bullying is a repeated form of harassment in which the behavior is intended, or perceived to intend, to harm or to cause distress to another. The action occurs repeatedly over time and, in addition to causing harm or distress, has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause disruption of the orderly operation of the school. Bullying may be physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted or psychological. It may include, but is not limited to, actions such as verbal taunts, physical aggression, extortion of money or possessions, exclusion from peer groups within school, name-calling, or harassment and intimidation consistent with the district’s policy on Student Discipline, Policy, #218.
What should I do if I believe my child has been bullied?

Bullying is considered to be a very serious violation. All suspected bullying should be reported immediately to a member of the administration so that it can be investigated.

What is the “Blue Hand Group”?

The Blue Hand Group consists of volunteer students who want to stand up against bullying. They promote positive relationships, report or stop bullying, and provide supportive friendships to students that are being bullied. They provide assemblies, create art work for school hallways, and help with other fun activities throughout the school year. The Blue Hand Group is open to all students, who fill out an application and write an essay. Students in the Blue Hand Group who are involved with bullying others, will be removed.

GANG ACTIVITY

Does the Lebanon School District have a policy on gang activity?

Yes. The School Board strongly believes that a safe and orderly environment is essential for effective teaching and learning to occur within the school setting.

The Superintendent/designee shall consult with law enforcement officials semi-annually to establish a list of gang-related items, symbols, and behaviors. The principal will maintain this list in the main office of the school.

What type of conduct is considered gang activity?

Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:

1. Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs or other items which may be evidence or other items which may be evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang;

2. Communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.), to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;

3. Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with gang or gang-related symbols or slogans;

4. Requiring payment of protection, insurance, or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity;

5. Inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity;
6. Soliciting others for gang membership;

7. Committing any other illegal act or other violation of school district policies that relates to gang activity.

**What happens if a student is suspected of participating in gang related conduct?**

Before being suspended for a first offense of wearing gang-related attire (when not involved in any kind of altercation), a student will receive a warning and will be allowed to immediately change or remove the attire that is in violation of this policy. Other types of gang related conduct will be investigated by administration and appropriate action will be taken. (Policy 218.1)

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

**What does a parent involvement policy mean?**

The Lebanon School District values parent involvement because we know that our students will achieve more when their parents/guardians are involved in the educational process of their children.

The Lebanon School District has a Parent Involvement Policy which is designed to foster student success and positive home-school relationships.

The Parent Involvement Policy, which includes a parent survey and checklist, is printed on the district calendar. In addition, the Policy is posted on the district website.

**CHANGE OF PHONE OR ADDRESS**

We can’t contact you if we can’t find you! Please inform us of any changes in phone or address. A note or phone call to the office will be appreciated. We must have proof of residency, to change your address, such as a utility bill or lease.

**CALLING THE SCHOOL**

We would like to encourage you contact Lebanon Middle School any time you have questions or concerns regarding your child or the school program. Your call will be expedited by calling the district number (273-9391) and asking for the middle school.

Thank you and we look forward to a great year!