



Frequently Asked Questions Orchard Park Middle School Parents

Q. What is the Mission of the Middle School?

- A. To explore the unfamiliar; to discover the possible; to grow in knowledge together, as we navigate into the future. We believe in the successful transition from elementary to high school, from child to young adult, and from dependent to independent learner as we focus on the development of the whole child.

What is a base?

- A. A base is the team of teachers for the core subjects (math, English, science, social studies, and foreign language). In 6th grade, bases have four classrooms; in 7th and 8th grade, teams consist of five teachers, when foreign language is on base.

Q. Will all students on the same base be in classes together?

- A. Students on a base will share the same teachers and have classes in close proximity. Students on base eat lunch together. They may or may not be in the same core classes or satellites together.

Q. What is a satellite?

- A. A satellite is any class other than math, science, social studies, English, reading, or foreign language. This includes, art, technology, and life and careers skills, to name a few.

Q. What does it mean when my child's schedule "rotates"?

- A. When a student's schedule "rotates" it means that the base classes change order within the day. Satellite classes and the rest of the schedule remain unchanged.

Q. What is a base meeting?

- A. A meeting held during the school day with all base teachers, the counselor, and any other staff who may need to be part of the conversation to assist your child.

Q. How do I schedule a base meeting?

- A. Call the grade-level counselor to schedule a base meeting.

Q. How do I contact a teacher?

- A. By email (first initial + last name@opschools.org), by telephone (Counseling Center: 209-6233), base meeting or Parent/Teacher conference.

Q. What is a Parent/Teacher conference?

- A. Two half days are set aside at the end of November or the first week in December for Parent/Teacher conferences. The dates are on the District Calendar. Parents meet with all base teachers to discuss any concerns for a student, including academics, peer relationships, or overall growth and development. It is **not mandatory** that a parent come in for one of these conferences.

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Q. How do I sign up for a Parent/Teacher conference?

A. Parents call the Counseling Center secretary (209-6233) during the month of November if they would like to schedule a conference on one of these half days.

Q. Who attends Open House in the fall?

A. This is for parents only. There is a separate Open House for each grade. While it is optional, Open House is a great way to meet teachers, learn about the Middle School, and see some old friends.

Q. Who attends grade-level Activity Night?

A. This is for the specified grade-level students only. The student must attend the Middle School and be the appropriate grade level. No guests/parents may attend unless they are an approved PTO Volunteer for the evening. Tickets are purchased during lunch periods in the days leading up to the event.

Q. What is the Parent Portal?

A. The Parent Portal is a website that provides parents access to information specific to an individual child, such as attendance, current grades, report cards, and school news. A password and user ID are required to gain access. Please remember that the Parent Portal is a tool to open communication between parent and child. If you have a question about an assignment or grade, please speak with your child first. This allows the child to take ownership of his/her learning, a great skill that needs to be developed during the middle school years.

Q. How do I get a User ID and Password for the Parent Portal?

A. Contact the Middle School Counseling Center secretary (209-6233) or District Office (209-6330). The information may be mailed to the parent, or the parent may pick up the information in person with picture ID from either location.

Q. Who do I call if my child is ill, or will be late, or needs to be picked up early?

A. Call the Attendance Office at 209-6412.

Q. How do I get homework if my child misses school?

A. On the **SECOND CONSECUTIVE** day of a student's absence, parents may call the Counseling Center secretary (209-6233) to request homework. The assignments may be picked up after 2:30 that day from the Counseling Center. **REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 10:30 A.M.**

Q. What if my child forgets his/her lunch, project, homework, gym clothes, etc.?

A. Any items a student has left at home may be dropped at the Welcome Desk in the foyer. The student should know to check here if he/she realizes something was left at home. **Items will not be delivered to students, and they will not be notified that an item has been dropped off.**

Q. Where is Lost and Found?

A. The Welcome Desk in the Middle School foyer is the building lost and found. If the item was left on a bus, then the bus garage would have the item.