Transitioning to Middle School

The transition from fifth grade to middle is a big step in a student’s education. The change can be somewhat overwhelming at first, but with a good plan and lots of support, this transition can be made without much stress.

The following are items that help a student with this transition:

1. **Organization** –

Use of Time – students will learn to plan out their route, learn the bell system and understand about tardiness.

Excessive Tardies – will lead to detention (lunch) or level 1 discipline

Accordion Folders – these keep papers better organized and take less space in their lockers (large binders are cumbersome and will not fit in the lockers).

Lockers – buy a combination lock (with dial) and practice over the summer how to use the lock. This will be a big time saver for students the first week.

Building layout – 6th Graders have the majority of their classes on the second floor (fine arts, PE and lunch on first floor).

1. **What to buy and not buy** –

**Buy**:

Locker Shelves – will be available on-line for purchase, they are specifically made to fit our lockers and will last all three years and beyond.

PE Uniforms – also purchase on line.

String Bags – great for gym clothes – available through our student store

School Supplies – A FSMS specific list will be coming out this Spring, broken down by semester. The list will not be the same as FBISD list.

**Don’t Buy**:

Backpacks with wheels – They will not fit in the lockers.

Binders – binders that are over 2” wide will not fit in student lockers.

Planner – PTO provides each student a planner at the beginning of the school year. If lost, students will need to purchase a new one.

1. **Classes** –

Electives – students do not always get their first choice. All sixth graders get a fine arts elective (Art, Theater, Choir, Band, Orchestra) and a core elective to support/enrich core area subjects (especially for Math and ELA)

\*Counselors will work with parents should there be a conflict.

Pre-AP versus Regular Classes – “Choose what is right not what looks good.”

New pathway requirements may be coming for upper level grades. Students don’t need to have all Pre-AP classes – be realistic about your child’s ability – AP classes have higher standards and carry more rigor.

\*\*\*Balance School with outside Activities

AP Failures – removed from Pre-AP after first nine weeks.

Credit by Exam (CBE) – students lose the foundation (math)

If you fail a Core Class (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies), you fail for the year and will need to attend Summer School. Parent will have to pay tuition for student to attend.

Tutorials – teachers provide at no cost before or after school. Students are responsible to make it to tutorials on their own.

\*\* There is no teacher request.

Off Campus PE – must complete district paperwork before August deadline.

Course Selection Window is February 27th – March 10th

1. **Lunch** – students will have more choices, more independence (sit where they like), will spend more money (monitor their account) and cannot purchase items for other students.
2. **Phones** – new district procedures.

Phones are not a necessity – but you will get talked into purchasing one.

FSMS has a phone contract that each student and parent must sign.

“O” Tolerance with phones in the Locker Rooms

1. **Other Items** –

Registration – on-line and appointment if new to school, not necessary if coming from a FBISD zoned school

Report Cards and Progress Reports are electronic and paper copies only upon request. (Family Access)

Tests – students take semester exams for all areas.

Services – will continue if they receive services in elementary (i.e. 504)

Parent Involvement – numerous opportunities to volunteer, PTO

Fund Raising – only one school wide fund raiser (Falcon Fund) but departments will have own fund raisers (i.e. Band)

Transportation – car riders, bus riders, bikers and walkers

Assigned Grade Level Counselor and Assistant Principal – for each grade level, the counselor and AP will follow your child for all three years from 6th through 8th grade.

Clubs - see school webpage- a wide variety

Team Sports – begin in 7th Grade (just added boys and girls soccer)

After School Activities - supervision ends at dismissal

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