

# Preparing Your Child for Middle School

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Middle School can be a time of many “firsts” for your child.

- ❖ The first time to change classes within a time limit.
- ❖ The first time to use a locker.
- ❖ The first time to have multiple teachers.
- ❖ The first time to eat in a cafeteria.
- ❖ The first time change for P.E. class.
- ❖ The first time to pack jerseys for after school sporting events.



In addition to these “firsts,” students deal with the natural social, emotional, and developmental changes of a pre-teen. The following lists are intended to help prepare your child in a variety of areas to make the transition into middle school as smooth as possible.

## Academic

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1. Get a layout of the school and mark the locations of the child’s classes.
2. Get a copy of your child’s schedule and discuss the location of each classroom.
3. Find out the length of time between class periods and time your child doing his/her chores in that length of time.
4. Buy your child a locker shelf and practice organizing his/her notebooks at home.
5. Take your child shopping for school supplies. Make color coded binder labels that include the child’s name and subject in large font.
6. Teach your child to use the school’s website to search for schedules, announcements, and events.
7. Teach your child to check Renweb on Sunday evening and record upcoming assignments.
8. Teach your child to check Renweb daily to keep current.
9. Make sure your child has an easy to use daily planner and is proficient in using it.
10. Train your child in using the information in his planner to pack his homework each afternoon.
11. Review the school’s handbook with your student including the rules, dress code, and consequences for violations. Answer questions about anything that is unclear to the student.

## Social/Emotional

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1. Encourage your child to join sports teams and clubs and to attend MS socials.
2. Talk about social skills and the traits that make a good friend. Discuss ways to recognize and avoid middle school drama.
3. Talk about appropriate and inappropriate discussions at the lunch table.
4. Teach students to make eye contact and speak clearly to adults.
5. Teach students how to clean the table and their lunch area properly.
6. Encourage your child to talk privately to a teacher when he/she has a problem. Role play a conversation.
7. Set monitors and limits on social media and phone time. It is good to make students “disconnect” from phone and social media at a certain time each evening.

## Organizational

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1. Designate a “Homework Center” in the house (not in front of the TV). Make sure this spot is well equipped with papers, pencils, etc. and free from distractions.
2. Teach your child to re-pack his backpack, gym clothes, and instrument each evening and set it in a designated spot.
3. Post a calendar in the “Homework Center” as a reminder of when students will need instruments, game clothes, practice clothes, lunch money, etc.
4. Teach your child to record sports events, extra-curricular events, etc. in his daily planner to help him plan ahead.
5. Teach your child to clean out his backpack and binders regularly. Toss things that are no longer needed and file things that are still being used.
6. Teach your child personal responsibility and problem-solving skills by NOT dropping off forgotten homework, lunches, gym clothes, instruments, etc. Allow the student to receive the natural consequences for their forgetfulness and then discuss practical steps the student can take to avoid forgetting the item in the future.