

Mendham Township Middle School
16 Washington Valley Road
Brookside, New Jersey 07926

Dear Parents and Students,

On behalf of the faculty and staff, we wish to welcome you to the Middle School. Whether you are new to our building, our district, or are returning for another year, you may be assured that a comprehensive educational program second to none is being provided at all grade levels.

The intent of this handbook is to provide parents, students, and community members with a basic understanding of the programs and services available to students at the Middle School. Also provided for your review are the necessary Board of Education policies, school rules and procedures which govern our school and are required to ensure that all students have an opportunity to enjoy the facilities and services available.

If additional information is necessary, please feel free to contact the school office at (973) 543 – 2505.

Mendham Township Middle School Student/Parent Handbook

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. John Fanning	Interim Superintendent of Schools
Mr. James Mallen	Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Mr. Stephen Geisel	Middle School Principal
Mrs. Elaine Lombardi	Elementary School Principal

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mrs. Marcia Peters	President
Mr. Larry Paragano	Vice President
Mrs. Janet Richards	
Mrs. Marybeth Thomas	
Mr. Rick Pappalardo	
Mr. Jim Downs	
Mr. Kevin Smith	

CHILD STUDY TEAM

Mrs. Kathleen Woodward	Director of Special Services
Mrs. Kathleen Ruskin	Social Worker
Dr. Linda Sisco	LDT
Ms. Micheline Cote	LDT
Ms. Meredith Panik	Psychologist
Mrs. Deborah Baron	Speech Therapist
Mrs. Maureen Hengst	Speech Therapist

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

In accordance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations, the educational programs within the Mendham Township Schools are accessible to all students regardless of gender, race, religion or handicap. A grievance procedure covering these issues is available through the school principal. Inquiries regarding affirmative action should be directed to the Mendham Township Business Administrator at 973 – 543 – 7107. Inquiries involving handicap access (Section 504) should be addressed to the middle school principal at 973 – 543 – 2505.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF

Ms. Christina Abrahamsen
 Mrs. Ieva Alverson
 Dr. Patricia Back
 Mrs. Kim BaRoss
 Mrs. Elizabeth Barter
 Mr. Ronald Bergamotto
 Mrs. Carol Blanchard
 Mr. Russell Branch
 Mrs. Stacey Bray
 Mrs. Nancy Brychta
 Ms. Lynn Burke
 Mrs. Corinne Butler
 Mrs. Donna CasaGrande
 Ms. Kelly Cole
 Mrs. Sandy Cullis
 Mrs. Janet DeMeo
 Miss Marisa DiFalco
 Mr. Jeff Dillon
 Mr. Daniel Doherty
 Mrs. Maria Doto
 Mrs. Louise Drillich
 Mrs. Diane Emr
 Mrs. Mary Esposito
 Mrs. Marie Gagne
 Mrs. Catherine Gustavsen
 Ms. Francesca Hare
 Mrs. Anne Herrmann
 Mrs. Tara Horutz
 Ms. Carol Ann Hueston
 Mrs. Joyce Kierst
 Miss Noel Lazoriccek
 Mrs. Tracy Longo
 Mrs. Barbara McLoughlin
 Mrs. Deb Mattioli
 Mrs. Debbie Mills
 Mrs. Patricia Perlett
 Mrs. Charlene Pintado
 Mrs. Sheila Ramsay
 Mrs. Cathy Reilly
 Mrs. Clare Riina
 Mrs. Karen Schaberg
 Mrs. Cindy Scharf-Dour
 Mr. Matt Smoot
 Mrs. Wendy Stewart
 Mrs. Cindie Svenson
 Ms. Rachel Tubbs
 Mrs. Jennifer Vazquez
 Mrs. Nancy Wilson

Language Arts
 Special Education
 Language Arts
 Mathematics
 Special Education
 General Music
 Foreign Language
 Instrumental Music
 Science
 Special Education
 Social Studies
 Special Education
 Computer Technology
 Mathematics
 Science
 Mathematics
 Special Education
 Physical Education/Health
 Physical Education/Health
 Social Studies
 Language Arts
 Mathematics
 Science
 Language Arts
 Language Arts
 Art
 Basic Skills
 Language Arts
 Special Education
 Nurse
 Special Education
 Science
 Special Education
 Special Education
 Special Education
 Librarian/Media
 Special Education
 Foreign Language
 Social Studies
 Language Arts
 Strings/Orchestra
 Physical Education/Health
 Social Studies
 Special Education
 Foreign Language
 Guidance
 Special Education
 Special Education

Office Secretarial Staff:

Mrs. Deborah Nisivoccia
 Mrs. Terry Ensminger
 Mrs. Marian Arena
 Mrs. Sue Rothenberg

Custodial Staff:

Mr. Frank Criscuolo
 Mr. Carlos Escheverry
 Mr. Sam Susco
 Mr. Vanaldo Grant, Sr.

BELL SCHEDULE

Time	5 Min. Warning rings in gym and in art room	Week A Period	Week B Period	Note
8:05 – 8:10				All classrooms open and supervised
8:10 – 8:18		Homeroom	Homeroom	Daily notices Attendance Flag Salute
8:22 – 9:03	8:57	First	Seventh	
9:05 – 9:46	9:41	Second	Eighth	
9:48 – 10:29	10:24	Third	Third	
10:31 – 11:12	11:07	Fourth	Fourth	
11:14 – 11:55	11:50	Fifth	Fifth	
		11:14 – 11:34	11:14 – 11:34	Lunch grade 5
		11:34 – 11:55	11:34 – 11:55	Lunch grade 6
11:58 – 12:39	12:34	Sixth	Sixth	
		11:58 – 12:18	11:58 – 12:18	Lunch grade 7
		12:18 – 12:39	12:18 – 12:39	Lunch grade 8
12:42 – 1:23	1:18	Seventh	First	
1:25 - 2:06	2:01	Eighth	Second	
2:08 – 2:50	2:45	Enrichment	Enrichment	
2:50				Dismissal

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Art

The art program develops creative, social, physical, emotional and aesthetic growth in all students. Students are initially introduced to elements of art and design such as value, color, form, shape, line and texture. Individual artists will be studied and opportunity is given for students to participate in a variety of studio experiences including two and three-dimensional work. Emphasis is placed upon an appreciation of art within all times, cultures and civilizations. Additionally, students can explore new horizons and develop the ability to express themselves through their own work.

Computers

The objective of the computer program is to have students demonstrate an understanding of the nature and operation of technology systems. Students will develop positive attitudes toward technology uses that support lifelong learning, collaboration, personal pursuits, and productivity. The program will concentrate on using technology tools in order to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity. Over the course of the year, students will utilize computers by constructing technology-enhanced models, preparing publications, and producing other creative works. Students will employ technology in order to make informed decisions and develop strategies for solving problems in the real world.

Foreign Language: French

In grade five, students will be offered a survey course in French for eighteen weeks. They will be given the opportunity to listen, speak, read and write in the language, as well as to appreciate the cultural traditions of French-speaking nations. The emphasis here and in all levels of French will be on communication.

Sixth grade students who have selected French as their foreign language will continue to work on the pronunciation of the French sound system as well as their ability to read and write using proper syntax and vocabulary. French customs and the French school system will be discussed. Students will learn to introduce themselves, count to 100, ask and tell the date, discuss the weather, tell time, and order in a restaurant.

In French seven, students continue to improve their proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. More attention is given to grammatical points and verb conjugations, present and past, which are always introduced in context and real-life situations. Students will describe themselves and others, including personality traits, and age. Daily routines as well as interests of teenagers will be discussed.

French eight students refine their skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking and become more creative in using the language. Students study the geography of France and Paris and discuss the cultural similarities and differences which exist between our two cultures. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have finished all the requirements of a high school French 1 curriculum.

Foreign Language: Spanish

In grade five students will be offered a survey course in Spanish for eighteen weeks. The initial course in Spanish is designed to introduce fifth graders to basic concepts of the Spanish language and culture. Listening and comprehension skills, as well as reading and writing will be acquired by students at their level of understanding. Spanish holidays, customs, and traditions will be presented as well.

The grade six program provides a continuation of the four basic communication skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading and writing with emphasis on oral skills. Students will learn to introduce themselves, to ask and tell where one is from, to ask and tell the date, to count to 1000, to ask and tell the time, to express likes and dislikes. Spanish culture is presented in context with the various lessons.

Through immersion in the Spanish language, seventh and eighth grade students begin to simultaneously develop the skills of speaking and listening without the need of translation. Seventh grade introduces fundamental grammar concepts: the present tense, the uses of *ser* and *estar*, the negative, irregular verbs, possessive adjectives, definite and indefinite articles, and interrogatives. Eighth grade expands the instruction of grammar to include stem-changing verbs, indirect and direct objects, pronouns, the preterite tense, possessive adjectives and more irregular verbs. Both grade levels focus on Spanish culture and the historical influence of Spain in the United States.

General Music

The objective of the general music program is to improve musical perception, to encourage musical reaction, to enhance musical creativity through experiences in performing, composing, and improvising; to increase the depth and breath of concepts about the art and language of music and how it works; to develop analytical abilities, and to promote a more refined evaluation of music, so that the students will become aware of it as a means of communication and personal expression.

The students will be active participants in the general music class, as they experience singing, listening, movement, improvisation, reading and writing music, and composing. Through these experiences, the students will be learning about music appreciation, the properties of music, its history and notation, basic music theory, and keyboard relevance. Additionally, the students will gain an introduction to, as well as develop an understanding of, the relationship between music and the other arts and those disciplines outside of this field.

During the course of the year, the general music program is complimented by field trips. Students in each grade attend a professional performance – a symphony, ballet, opera, or musical production, that further reinforces what was learned in the classroom, while at the same time providing yet another opportunity for learning.

Health/Family Life

The health cycle begins with a mental health unit that focuses on self-image, emotional needs, stress management, and relating to others. Nutrition, safety, state mandated drug education and family life, which incorporates sex education, are units included at each grade level. Family life parent presentations are given annually for each grade level.

Language Arts

The language arts curriculum encompasses the skills of communication that enable us to convey ideas by writing and speaking and to receive information by reading and listening. In each of the four grades students read widely in the various genre, but the emphasis shifts and the study of literature becomes more complex as they progress from fifth through eighth grade. The writing program synthesizes traditional elements of spelling, grammar, and mechanics with the process of composition. As students mature, the scope and nature of the assignments reflect that development. In each of their middle school years, students also have extensive opportunities to develop oral and listening skills.

Mathematics

The focus of the fifth grade mathematics program is to introduce and develop advanced arithmetic and problem-solving skills with decimals, fractions, percents, and whole numbers.

In grades six through eight the mathematics program offers two courses – a regular and an accelerated course. These groups are determined by the use of a math identification matrix that is applied at the end of the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. In the accelerated programs, students move through material at a faster pace, thus allowing time to explore concepts in greater depth.

In grade six, arithmetic concepts are developed and reinforced and are applied in problem solving. Students are prepared for advanced mathematics through the introduction of variables in simple expressions and equations. In grade seven, students study pre-algebra. The concepts of variables, expressions and equations are developed and reinforced. There is also an emphasis on the introduction and development of negative numbers. In grade eight, students apply variables and reinforce the concept of negative numbers. In the regular grade eight program, students experience an introduction to algebra. In the accelerated program, students will study high school Algebra 1.

Science

The sequence of middle school science initially focuses on an integrated approach in grade five with students receiving instruction in life, environmental, and physical science. Commencing in the sixth – eighth grades, the program is a unified approach with students studying earth science (6th), life science (7th), and physical science (8th). The program is intensive at the middle school level and many topics at each grade level are covered in depth, with discovery and process skills utilized as much as possible.

Social Studies

The fifth grade social studies program is a course in world geography. Emphasis is placed on the study of different regions of the world. Students examine where, why, and how people live on earth and use the earth to satisfy their basic needs. Through a systematic regional approach, students learn to identify places by location and by their distinctive physical and human features. Students establish an understanding of the cultural characteristics of the people who inhabit each region so they can make comparisons between different areas of the world. Maps, charts and graphs are tools used to acquire, process, and assess geographical information. Students discuss and evaluate current events of regions studied. They utilize computer technology whenever appropriate.

The sixth grade social studies course is a course in human heritage. Students examine where, why and how ancient civilizations lived on earth and how they influenced and contributed to western civilization. Through a systematic regional approach, students learn to identify places by location and by their distinctive physical and human features. They attempt to understand the cultural characteristics of the people who inhabited each region and to make comparisons between the different ancient civilizations of the world. Students use maps, charts, and graphs to acquire, process, and assess geographical information. They discuss and evaluate current event of the regions studied. The areas of concentration are Prehistoric people, Southwest Asia, Egypt, India, Persia, China, Greece and Rome.

In the seventh and eighth grades the courses cover the history of the United States. The program seeks to develop a knowledge of the history of the United States, an appreciation for the ideals of democracy, an understanding of how our governmental institutions function and a recognition of the link between current events and the past. Separate units on map skills, the Constitution, the Presidential election process, and newspaper reading are included. The development and reinforcement of study and research skills are also emphasized.

Physical Education

The philosophy of the Mendham Township Physical Education program takes into consideration the development of the total child. It emphasizes the enrichment of a student's life through awareness of and participation in various physical disciplines. One of the essentials of this program is to provide a wide range of experiences beneficial to the developmental needs of the child through progressive skills and activities. The physical education program instills an awareness and appreciation of the need for a wide range of activities throughout each individual's life.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The library media center is an integral component of the Middle School educational program, embodying the school's philosophy of implementing, developing, enhancing, and promoting basic processing skills and information literacy. The center contains extensive, diverse materials in all formats, including print, multimedia, and electronic. The media specialist, in concert with the classroom teachers, provides assistance to individuals and small groups, as well as entire classes. With the quantity of information doubling every few years, students cannot be expected to acquire all the facts of a given subject. Rather the media center can be instrumental in teaching students how to locate and process information, utilizing technology as a tool.

In order to maximize the use of the media center, it is recommended that students observe the following procedures:

1. The library is open from 8:05 A.M. to 3:05 P.M. When visiting as an individual during class periods, a signed pass is required.
2. Students should become familiar with the procedures for charging out and returning materials, with the location and organization of the collection, and with proper use of the audio-visual equipment.
3. All books, except reference and reserve books, may be borrowed for four weeks and renewed once.
4. Periodicals, reference and reserve books must be signed out during enrichment period returned before 8:10 A.M. the following day.
5. Although fines are not levied on overdue materials, borrowing privileges can be suspended.
6. Fines will be assessed for lost and/or damaged materials.
7. Students should browse and work quietly so that others are not disturbed.

COMPUTER LABS

The computer labs (Room 224 and in the Media Center) each contain twenty-five XP/Microsoft Office configured machines with Internet access, scanners, and networked printers. Students may use the labs during enrichment period provided they have a signed pass from their sending teacher. A signed AUP must be on file in order for a student to have access to Middle School computers.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Counseling Department

The contemporary school counseling program focuses on the developmental needs of all students and is an integral component of the school's instructional program.

The school counselor serves as a liaison for administrator, staff, and parents to help every child to reach his/her fullest potential. Through the counseling department, programs are developed which address students' academic, social, and emotional needs during their middle school years. The counselor also utilizes intervention strategies to correct existing problems and prevent their escalation. Additionally, crisis intervention is provided when the need exists.

Counseling programs that emanate from the counseling office are designed to help students grow personally and socially, to assist students in education planning, and to teach decision-making. Therefore, an effective school counseling program permeates the school environment.

Special Services Department

Mendham Township Schools have a reputation for creative problem solving. Special education in New Jersey also has that philosophy. That is why almost every year the rules and regulations governing special education are modified changed and improved. Educators and parents are constantly looking for new and better ways to meet the needs of students who have learning differences. We, at the Middle School, are refining and improving the programs that are available to our students.

Resource Centers are available in all grades depending upon individual student needs. Special education teachers teach academic subjects in the Resource Center and also provide academic support within the regular classroom. In-class support exposes the student to the in-depth knowledge of the content area teacher while providing learning strategies from the special educator and modifications as needed.

Study Skills is available to fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth graders and is offered in lieu of foreign language. Organizational skills, as well as strategies for test taking, studying, proof reading and note taking are all covered.

Homework Club is held after school Tuesday through Thursday for approximately one hour. Teachers or parents recommend students who have difficulty getting homework completed for this program. Assistance is given to students individually in a quiet environment.

HEALTH SERVICES

The school nurse is available for any student with a personal health concern, illness or injury during the school day. The nurse is a team member to turn to when a student's welfare may be influenced by a health factor. A student's physical well-being is as important to us as his/her academic success.

The school nurse is responsible for keeping all student health records. The nurse should be notified of communicable diseases, updated immunizations and health concerns.

State Mandated Health Testing

New Jersey law recommends measuring height and weight annually for all students and screening vision and hearing for all sixth and eighth grade students. The Middle School complies with state recommendations. Annual scoliosis screening (age ten and older) is also conducted.

Physicals

Physicals are required for new students, all fifth and seventh grade students, and any student interested in trying out or participating in the interscholastic sports program. Required physical examinations must be done by a family physician. The results of any physical completed by a family physician will then be reviewed by the school physician.

Medications

Occasionally parents request that the school nurse administer medications to children in school. To comply with Mendham Township Board of Education policy, the following procedures will be followed:

1. A note with date and signature must accompany ALL medications, stating the dosage to be given, the time, how long this will continue and the reason for administration (forms are provided).
2. All medications MUST be brought to the nurse.
3. For prescription medications, current written orders from the physician are to be provided to the school nurse. The information should detail the diagnosis or type of illness, the name of the medication, dosage and time of administration.
4. The medication must be in the original labeled container supplied by the pharmacy with the child's name, date, medication, etc. If necessary, please request two containers be prepared when the prescription is filled.
5. The use of non-prescription medications such as Tylenol, Advil, etc. is discouraged. Such medication, while not requiring a physician's note, may be administered only when the medication is sent to the nurse in its original container and is accompanied by a signed note from the parent.

This information will contribute to the safety of your child and avoid errors when medication must be taken at school. Additionally, the school nurse should be advised of any medications being taken by your child at home, which may in any way affect performance at school.

Emergency Cards

An emergency card is kept for each student. It is most important that each card is updated. The school nurse must be notified of any changes of a parent's employer, telephone number, doctor, and emergency contact person.

Physical Education Excuses

If a student needs to be excused for more than two days, the school nurse must be provided with a note from the student's physician stating the reason for the excuse and the expected duration of the restriction. The note from the physician should indicate the date the student may resume physical education activities. Physical education excuses for one or two days require a note from the student's parent/guardian.

SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

School sponsored activities are generally offered during enrichment. Some may also require before and/or after school time commitments. Please note that activity offerings differ from year to year, and some activities may be deleted as others are added.

Student Council

The purpose of the Student Council is to encourage and generate school spirit; to promote understanding among faculty, administration, and students; to develop leadership and responsibility within the student body; and to give students actual experience with participatory democracy.

The entire student body elects the president, vice-president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, and treasurer. Representatives are then elected from each grade. Meetings are held weekly during enrichment.

Student Council activities include dances, service projects, and other activities designed to promote school spirit.

Peer Leadership

This program allows students to work in leadership roles to help other students in school, to develop their own “emotional intelligences”, to serve as positive role models for other students and develop a group that focuses on working well with others within the school community.

The peer leaders’ efforts will be directed towards helping the incoming fifth grade assimilate into our school community. They will also help those students (grades 5-8) who have moved into the district feel accepted in our school and experience academic as well as social success.

Newspaper

All students are invited to apply for positions on the school newspaper. Students may do reporting, layout work, computer graphics, and word processing. The sponsoring teacher selects those students who have demonstrated good work habits and writing skills to be the editors.

Yearbook

Eighth graders work on photography, copy production, layout, and the design elements of the yearbook from September to March. Due to the nature of the task, students will be expected to attend some after school sessions.

Eighth Grade Class Officers

Elected officers meet weekly with the eighth grade advisors to plan their fund raising and other activities. The major fund-raiser is the annual magazine drive. Some of the events in which students participate include Project U.S.E., a trip to Philadelphia, another class trip, and other class projects and activities.

Band and Chorus

Students have the opportunity of joining the Middle School band and chorus. Students interested in participating in the school band are scheduled for individual and/or group lessons on a rotating basis during the school day. Additional practices are sometimes scheduled before school or during enrichment period. Students participating in the chorus are scheduled for practice during enrichment periods and before school. Students participating in the band and/or chorus have the opportunity to perform at the holiday concert, the spring concert, and graduation.

Mind Bowl

Mind Bowl is an activity emphasizing global knowledge and quick recall. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students work in teams to answer questions about math and science, history and geography, English, literature, and vocabulary, art and music, and sports and entertainment. The activity culminates in a competition against teams from schools represented in the West Morris Gifted and Talented Consortium.

Rogate

Rogate (Resources Offered in Gifted and Talented Education) is a program offered by the Education Information and Resource Center in Sewell, New Jersey. Its purpose is to identify seventh and eighth grade students who are strong in language and/or math and to offer them special programs to supplement their regular schoolwork. Standardized achievement test scores determine eligibility.

During their seventh and eighth grade years, Rogate students may attend academic interest lectures and they may also elect to take the SATs.

Critical Issues

As eighth graders, Rogate students may become members of Critical Issues. Mentored at school, they are required to make an independent research study on a current social issue or scientific principle, and then are given the opportunity to present their research at a student exposition.

Mock Trial

Students are invited to join the Mock Trial organization. In this activity, students develop and create a mock trial to be entered into a contest. This club helps students to learn about their legal rights and responsibilities. It is both educational and enjoyable

Forensics

Forensics is open to all students interested in developing the skills of public speaking in the areas of oral interpretation, declamation, and original oratory. Participants may elect to/be chosen to present their selections at competitions held after school. When preparing for a meet, practices will involve after school time in addition to regularly scheduled enrichment periods.

Spelling Bee

Students may participate in two spelling bees. One program is sponsored by the North Jersey Newspapers Company and involves competitions on the local, regional, and national level. The second program is offered by the New Jersey Consortium for the Gifted and Talented. There are two levels of competition, one for students in grades four and five, and the other for students in grades six through eight.

Science Olympiad

Offered to students in grades six through eight, Science Olympiad provides students with an opportunity to translate scientific theory and technique into everyday application. Teams compete regionally each spring for individual medals and trophies in a field of 25 different scientific events. Science Olympiad participants meet during enrichment period.

Book Club

This group is for avid readers. Books will be read, discussed and enjoyed. The Book Club is open to grades six through eight and meets during enrichment period.

Peer Mediation

Being called to a peer mediation doesn't mean that a student is in trouble. It just means that a student has a conflict with another student that needs to be resolved. At the mediation, trained student mediators ask each student what their side of the story is and how each student can solve the problem at hand. In order to take part in a mediation, students must agree to try to solve the problem. The goal of peer mediation is to help students come up with peaceful resolutions to their own conflicts.

Student peer mediators help create a healthy and peaceful school climate, increase student communication and problem solving skills, prevent or decrease conflicts and arguments in school and encourage students to seek peaceful and mutually beneficial solutions to conflict.

Areas of peer mediated conflict resolution include but are not limited to rumor spreading, teasing, stealing, friendship problems, name calling, cooperation and related peer pressures.

School Production

Auditions for the school production are open to all Middle School students. Students may also work on scenery and stage crew. Some enrichment period time may be allotted for this activity, but it requires an after school time commitment of between two and four afternoons each week for approximately ten weeks.

Eligibility to participate in extra-curricular activities requires a student to be in good academic standing as defined by Board of Education Policy #6145.

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

Students in grades six, seven and eight are encouraged to try out for interscholastic athletic teams. The Middle School offers students the opportunity to participate in the following:

Fall Sports	Girls' Field Hockey Boys' Soccer, Girls' Soccer Boys' and Girls' Cross Country
Winter Sports	Boys' Basketball Girls' Basketball Boys' and Girls' Volleyball Cheerleading
Spring Sports	Softball Baseball Girls' Lacrosse Boys' Lacrosse

Team members will be selected on the basis of ability with the following exceptions:

- A sixth grade student will not be selected over a seventh or eighth grade student unless in the athletic department staff's professional judgment, that sixth grade student will receive a significant (50% or more) amount of playing time.
- Whereas a seventh or eighth grade student is comparable in ability to a sixth grade student, the seventh or eighth grade student will have priority in selection over the sixth grade student.

Students must have a physical exam by their own personal physician before they will be allowed to try out, attend practice sessions or play in any games.

Each team member must make the Mendham Township Middle School team his/her first priority. Participation on an outside team is permissible; however, in fairness to the other students, the school team must be the first priority in the event of conflicts.

Students must attend all games and practice sessions. In the event of illness or a family emergency, a written excuse from the parent is required.

Students may be dismissed from a team for the following reasons:

Two or more unexcused absences from games or practices.

Failure to obey the school rules and procedures at home games and when visiting other schools. Fighting, obscene gestures, profanity or rudeness to coaches or officials will result in immediate suspension from the team.

Failure to maintain academic standards required for participation in interscholastic sports as defined by Board of Education policy #6145.

Students must arrange for transportation home following practice sessions and games. Parents will be provided with a schedule of practice session times and anticipated times for the end of games. Parents must realize that coaches are required to stay until their last player has been picked up. Please be as prompt as possible. Failure to pick up a child in a timely manner could preclude him/her from participating in after school activities.

Students must be in attendance a half day to participate in after school activities.

Before giving permission for their child to participate in interscholastic sports, parents must realize that all sports carry the potential for injury.

ATTENDANCE

It is extremely important that each student attends school regularly and arrives on time. Absences because of illness, death in the family, quarantine, sudden extreme emergencies, and religious holidays will be excused. Absences from school for purposes of accompanying family members of others on vacations or trips are not considered excused absences. Students are expected to make up all work missed due to school or class absences.

“A pupil must be in attendance for 165 or more school days in order to be considered to have successfully completed the instructional program requirements of the grade/course to which he/she is assigned. A waiver of these attendance requirements may be granted for good cause upon the review of the guidance counselor and in concert with the building principal. Documentation of the nature and causes of these absences shall be the responsibility of the pupil and parent/guardian.”
Board of Education policy # 5113

Absences

Parents must notify the school office by 8:15 A.M. of all daily absences.

It is important that students try to keep up with their daily assignments when they are absent. It is expected that students will be prepared for classes upon their return to school whenever possible. Assignments for a single day's absence should be obtained from friends. Parents may call the school for work if their child will be out for more than one day due to illness only. Assignments will be available by 3:00 P.M. on the second day of an excused absence.

Upon the student's return to class, any additional assignments should be noted in an assignment pad with the date due. Work must be made up as soon as possible following the student's return in accordance with each teacher's classroom rules.

Early Dismissal

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the day unless written permission has been secured from home and approved by the administration. If a student leaves before the close of the school day, the parent making the pick-up must sign out the student in the main office, in the presence of school personnel.

Tardiness

Students will be considered tardy if they are not in homeroom by 8:10 A.M. If tardy, students are required to report to the office for a late pass. Students who are tardy three times will be assigned a recess detention for each successive unexcused tardy. Further lateness may result in after school detentions, parent conferences, etc.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The chain of command needs to be followed when discussing topics specific to your child. The perspective of a student, parent, or teacher on any particular topic may afford a different interpretation, and it is important that communication among all three occur prior to reaching the principal's office. Without knowing the specifics from all three parties, it is difficult for the principal to respond appropriately. The principal can only generalize and make assumptions, if he/she does not have feedback from everyone. However you wish to communicate with the teacher, it is only fair that all parties share their thoughts prior to touching base with the administration.

COMMUNICATION

The Middle School years are developmentally challenging for students during their pre-adolescence and adolescence. These are years of academic challenges, physical changes, and social pressures.

For the school, the mandate is clear. Effective and frequent communication between home and school becomes an essential component of each student's Middle School program.

The Middle School faculty currently uses the following procedures to communicate with parents:

Open House: Each fall, the Middle School invites parents to spend an evening at school. Parents follow their child's daily schedule using shortened periods. The faculty presents an overview of their instructional programs including classroom rules and procedures. Parents are encouraged to participate in the evening's activities and to familiarize themselves with their child's daily routine.

New Parents Reception: Parents of our new students are invited to a reception at which the Superintendent of Schools, building principal, Child Study Team, and guidance counselor answer questions and offer information to help families and their children assimilate into the school community. The Home School Association Officers help round out the presentation by offering a community perspective.

Conferences: Parent conferences are scheduled twice a year, in the fall and the spring. Although teachers have priority in requesting conferences, parents may also initiate them. As each teacher meets with many students, it is not possible to schedule a conference for every child. Often, a team of teachers will meet with parents to economize time.

During the school year, teachers frequently schedule conferences with parents as the need arises. These may be held during or after school. Telephone conferences are another viable form of communication.

Conferences can be held before school to accommodate the needs of working parents. Students may be invited to attend these conferences, as well as all other conferences. This strategy has proven to be successful in involving students in the problem-solving process regarding their school performance.

Report Cards: Report cards are issued four times a year and report progress for an entire marking period. See Handbook sections on "The Grading System" and "Report Cards" for details.

Progress Reports: At the mid-point of each marking period, teachers may send home progress reports which note outstanding academic progress or academic areas of concern. They also indicate weaknesses in study skills, organization, homework and test preparation.

Customarily, teachers send home progress reports for each child in the class during the first marking period. As the year continues, progress reports are sent home as needed.

Academic Monitoring Program: The purpose of the Academic Monitoring Program (AMP) is to provide weekly communication between home and school regarding students' academic and social progress. Students may be placed on AMPs based on the following guidelines:

1. Students will be placed on AMPs in any subject/s in which their report card grade is a "D" or an "F".
2. Students will be placed on AMPs in any subject in which the grade for that subject drops two grades. For example, going from an "A" to a "C" in a subject would necessitate placing a student on academic monitoring in that subject.
3. At mid point of the marking period (Progress Reports), students may be placed on academic monitoring in any subject in which they are performing below expectations and their grade is "D" or "F".

Teachers also have the option of placing a student on academic monitoring in their subject:

- To modify inappropriate school behavior.
- To improve test grades.
- To make up missed homework assignments.
- The student's IEP states that AMPs must be utilized.

Teachers will complete AMP forms weekly for students placed on academic monitoring. The forms are collated in the office and sent home on Fridays. We encourage you to read the AMPs together with your child and to make comments or observations. AMP forms must be signed and promptly returned to school on Monday mornings.

New Student Screening and Adjustment: New students may be given standardized tests to determine academic levels of proficiency if their cumulative records from their sending school districts do not contain standardized test results. Students entering grades six through eight will also be given a math placement test.

Because standardized testing provides only limited data, a New Students Adjustment Survey (NSAS) will be completed for each student by his/her teachers. This survey provides weekly information regarding academic skills, study habits, and social adjustment. The survey forms are sent home on Fridays, to be reviewed by the new student and his/her parent, and returned on Monday with comments, as needed. This survey will begin shortly after the start of school and continue for four weeks.

The results of the NSAS will be reviewed with other information, such as achievement test results, CST reports, interviews, speech screening, and parent input, to achieve program appropriateness.

Parent Contact Forms: Parent Contact Forms are used to notify parents when school or classroom rules have been violated. Usually a contact form advises parents of an after school detention. It explains the nature of the problem and gives the date and time of the detention. Contact forms may also be used to notify parents when several attempts to solve a problem have not been successful. The Parent Contact Form must be signed and returned to school on the day following its receipt.

The Guidance Office: The guidance office can be reached by calling the school phone number, 543 – 2505 ext 225. Its primary function is to accommodate the needs of individuals and groups of individuals within the larger context of the school system. The guidance counselor works with students and their families to ensure that each child has a positive school experience. The guidance office often functions as the liaison between home, school and the administration in order to design guidance programs that are appropriate for our students.

Messages to/for Students

Unlike the Elementary School where students are generally in one room for most of the day, Middle School students change classrooms, sometimes as many as nine times each day. In the Elementary School, a message for a student can be left in the teacher’s mailbox and that teacher will deliver the message. At the Middle School, the office must look up the individual child’s schedule and interrupt a class on the loudspeaker. We ask your cooperation in keeping such interruptions to the teaching period to a minimum.

THE GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is the means by which the school reports students’ academic progress to their parents. Teachers use numerical grades and/or letter grades to report progress in all academic classes and related arts.

Grading System

A+	96.5 - 100	C+	76.5 – 79.4
A	93.5 – 96.4	C	73.5 – 76.4
A-	89.5 – 93.4	C-	69.5 – 73.4
B+	86.5 – 89.4	D+	66.5 – 69.4
B	83.5 – 86.4	D	63.5 – 66.4
B-	79.5 – 83.4	D-	59.5 – 63.4
		F	Below 59.5

Exceptional Grading Conditions

I	Incomplete
P	Pass
F	Fail

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four times per year. Letter grades are used on report cards to reflect students' academic progress in each subject area during the marking period. A single grade in a subject encompasses all of the schoolwork completed during the marking period and usually includes daily work, homework, test/quiz grades, class participation, notebook preparation, and special projects.

In addition to a letter grade, teachers utilize an "Explanation of Grades". These comments serve to clarify the traditional letter grade by giving parents additional information about school performance.

Honor Roll

Superior effort and academic achievement are valued goals for our students. The Middle School recognizes the academic accomplishments of students in grades five through eight with an Honor Roll and during awards assemblies held following each marking period. At this time, certificates of achievement are presented to students who meet the following criteria.

High Honors	A- or above in all academic subjects B or above in all related arts
Honors	B or above in all academic subjects B or above in all related arts
Honorable Mention	Acknowledgment for students who have clearly demonstrated achievement but have not attained honor roll status due to the receipt of a <u>B-</u> in one subject only.

Academic subjects include language arts, math, science, social studies, foreign language, and study skills. Related arts include health, computers, art, music, and physical education.

Honor roll criteria for each of the designations are reviewed yearly to ensure that the degree of vigor for each category is appropriate for and meets the needs of our student body.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of each school day. It extends educational experiences beyond the classroom and reinforces learning by giving children an opportunity to practice without the pressure of time. Homework teaches students to be responsible, to organize time, to work independently, to practice good study skills and to develop self-discipline. Homework is one of the links between home and school that enables the parent to become more involved with his/her child's education.

All students are required to use weekly assignment logs or assignment pads. (Grades 5,6,7 and 8th will be given an agenda book by the school).

Homework must be legible, neat, and accurate in form and content.

All daily homework assignments should be completed on time. Late assignments may not be accepted for credit and may be counted as a "0" or an "F" in the marking period average.

The following guidelines will assist students in planning their daily schedules to allow adequate time for homework.

Grade five	approximately 15 minutes of homework per subject
Grade six	approximately 20 minutes of homework per subject
Grade seven	approximately 25 minutes of homework per subject
Grade eight	approximately 30 minutes of homework per subject

Enrichment tutor clubs (study hall) should be used for homework, library research, making up missed work, and conferring with teachers.

ABSENCES

In cases of an excused absence due to illness, the following procedures will be followed.

One day or single classes: Students are expected to contact friends for assignments, class notes, and notices, and to be prepared for class activities the following day.

Two or more days: Parents may contact the school for a complete list of missed work. Assignments may be picked up after 3:00 P.M. on the second day of an absence. Work should be completed as soon as possible following the student's return to school. It is generally recommended that the number of days absent is the number of days a student requires to make up missed assignments.

Students who have missed classes or assignments because of attendance at school sponsored activities are responsible for all missed homework and class work.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Mendham Township Middle School is a very well equipped and well-maintained building. Students are expected to take pride in the appearance of their school and to assume responsibility for maintaining it. They will be required to pay for any deliberate damage to the building or equipment and for damaged or lost textbooks.

All textbooks must be covered with suitable materials. "Contact" or other sticky materials are not to be used.

Book fines will be assessed for excessive damage. A general rule of thumb is to assess students approximately 20% per year for severely damaged books. For example, a one-year-old book that is severely damaged would be assessed at 80% of its current catalog value.

Students who return damaged books that can no longer be utilized the following year must pay the full current replacement value (new book price).

Parents and students are required to sign an Acceptable Use Policy governing Internet access and use of computer hardware and software. Held on file in the main office, this AUP will remain in effect for the student's Middle School career.

CARE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Each student must accept responsibility for the care and safety of his/her personal belongings. The hallway locker can be locked (optional), but students **MUST secure their gym locker**. Students should **never bring** large sums of money, valuable jewelry, or expensive equipment to school. The school cannot assume responsibility for the safety of such items.

The following are expectations for the use of the school lockers:

- Students should respect the rights and property of others. They should not go into any locker other than their own.
- For reasons of health, safety, and order, students should expect the principal or principal's designee to routinely inspect all lockers.
- Students should keep lockers free of all writing, stickers, and adhesive materials.
- Lockers must be cleaned out periodically.
- "Master" locks (combination, not key) are to be brought in by each student to secure his/her gym locker. "Master" lock combination locks may now also be utilized on hallway lockers at the students' discretion, however **a copy of the combination must be submitted to the main office**. It is the student's responsibility to see that the lock is fastened securely at all times.
- Students should check the "Lost and Found" in the office for any lost items.

Students may visit their lockers before each period. Students are asked not to bring backpacks to classrooms, as they create potentially hazardous conditions.

SAFETY ISSUES

Fire Drills

As prescribed by state law, schools are required to conduct two fire drills per month. The drills are for the purpose of preparing the student body to meet any emergency that might require a rapid evacuation of the building.

When evacuating the building during fire drills and other emergencies, the following rules are to be followed:

Leave the building through the nearest exit.

Walk rapidly, but do not run.

Do not talk; listen for instructions.

Bus Transportation

Riding the school bus is a privilege that imposes certain responsibilities on students. The following rules have been devised for the safety and general well-being of all our students.

Keep at least six feet back as the bus approaches.

Show respect to the driver and to one another.

Wear your seatbelt.

Remain seated when the bus is in motion.

Keep hands and arms inside of bus windows.

Do not consume food or beverages on the bus.

Do not shout, sing, use profanity or make obscene gestures.

Bus passes will be issued by the main office for the following changes **only**:

- Students getting off of their assigned bus at a different stop.

Written parental permission is required and **no pass will be issued after 1 p.m. except in the case of an emergency.**

ARRIVAL

Students walking to school or being driven by a parent should not arrive before 7:45 A.M. Students should be dropped off in the parking lot – not in the driveway in front of the school.

Unless weather is inclement, students may not enter the building before 8:05 unless they are expected for extra help.

Students will wait in front of the school until the bell at 8:05. Eighth graders stand at the right hand doors, seventh graders at the left hand doors, and fifth and sixth grades at the main doors.

On inclement weather days students will wait inside the building, but they may not go to their lockers until 8:05.

DISMISSAL

Students will be dismissed at 2:50. When they are dismissed, students should walk to their buses and line up. If a bus has not arrived, students should line up where that bus usually stops. Students should always stand behind the yellow line.

Students being met by parents should cross the driveway in front of the main door area and wait near the flagpole. Students should be picked up in the parking lot – not in the driveway in front of the school.

LUNCHROOM

Students who eat before recess must go to lunch prepared for recess. They may not return to their lockers after eating.

Students must remain seated during lunch except when they are purchasing food or cleaning up.

Students will behave appropriately. They are expected to converse in moderate voices, eat in a mannerly fashion, and be courteous to each other, as well as to supervising staff.

No one may use the lavatory without a pass and the supervising staff member's permission.

Students will be dismissed from the lunchroom when tables, floors, and benches are clean. The students at a table share collective responsibility for policing their own table/floor areas.

No food or drink will be allowed to leave the lunchroom.

RECESS

Students going to recess will meet the recess teacher by the gymnasium near the boys' locker room. Following dismissal from recess, they will return to class/lunch through the side door near the girls' locker room.

Students who eat before recess must go to lunch prepared for recess. They may not return to their lockers after lunch. Those who have recess before lunch must take their lunches to recess. They may not return to their lockers before eating.

There is no excuse for being late unless the student has a pass from a teacher. If a student needs to leave for any reason, the supervising teacher must give permission, and the student must check in upon return.

General Guidelines for Recess

All recess rules have been made to promote the safety and well-being of the students.

Specifically, students may *NOT*

Eat food at recess

Bring their own equipment to recess

Throw balls at other students

Tackle

Kick a ball, except when involved in a structured activity with teacher approval

Shove or push

Roof balls

Students should understand that non-observance of these guidelines, participating in any unsafe activity, or roofing a ball might result in losing the privilege of recess.

Students must return all equipment to the rack before dismissal.

ASSEMBLIES

Assembly programs are scheduled throughout the year. For example, students meet to hear Student Council campaign speeches, to learn about the magazine drive, and to receive awards. In addition, special grade level assemblies may be called. Students are also treated to special programs sponsored by the Home School Association, and arranged by its Cultural Arts Committee.

APPENDIX

The Board policies included in the appendix do not constitute a complete listing of all policies pertaining to Community, Administration, Business, Personnel, Students, and Instruction.

Copies of the complete policy book, *Township of Mendham Board of Education Policies and By-Laws*, are located in the Board Office, the Superintendent's Office, and in the Principals' Offices.