

Moss Side Middle School

Student Orientation
2023-2024





Moss Side Middle School - Grades 5-8

Administrative Team

Mr. Michael Jack, Principal

mjack@gatewayk12.org

Mrs. Lyndsey Love, Principal

llove@gatewayk12.org

Mr. Robert Hall, Principal

rhall@gatewayk12.org





Moss Side Middle School - Grades 5-8

Administrative Assistant Team

Mrs. Paula Dragovich, Administrative

pdragovich@gatewayk12.org

Ms. Lynnsey Oliver, Main Office/Attendance

loliver@gatewayk12.org

Mrs. Jaclyn Candioto, Main Office/Attendance

jcandioto@gatewayk12.org

Dean of Students

Mr. Eric Oddo

eoddo@gatewayk12.org

School Counseling Team

Mr. Richard Taylor (Gr. 5) -- (412) 373-5798

rtaylor@gatewayk12.org

Mrs. Betty Howard (Gr. 6) -- (412) 373-5799

bhoward@gatewayk12.org

Mrs. Mary Jayne Edwards (Gr. 7) - (412) 373-5788

medwards@gatewayk12.org

Mrs. Kathleen Johnston (Gr. 8) -- (412) 373-5789

kjohnston@gatewayk12.org

Mrs. Karen Brecht (Social Worker)

kbrecht@gatewayk12.org



Our Goals at Moss Side

We will provide ...

- a safe and supportive environment
- learning spaces and opportunities to encourage students to grow academically, socially, and emotionally
- a support system to receive encouragement and build positive relationships



Finalized Student Schedules

Student schedules were finalized and officially released to Skyward on **Thursday, August 10th.**

Any scheduling questions and/or changes can be requested through our school counseling department. However, please note that most schedules are final and will not be changed at this time.





Grade-Level Teaming for '23-'24

1. Team 5A

- Sweeney, Crow, Comunale, Partin, Stump
J.Shrum, Ribar, Boychuk

Team 6A

- Fleming, Smillie, Kuster, Yacamelli, Boychuk

Team 7A

- Smith, Swiger, Scott, Werner, Whetstone, Grainer

Team 8A

- Morris, Whalen, Palermo, Dunsmore, Hall, Manges
Connolly, Mastriano, Sauers

Team 5B

- Metz, Washington, McClelland, Gartman, H.Shrum
Stump, Ribar, Bracy

Team 6B

- McClelland, Swiger, Spudich, Partin, Bracy,
J.Shrum

Team 7B

- VanKirk, Whalen, McCabe, Werner, Stiles, Baer

Team 8B

- Steward, Palermo, Allen, Revak, McEwen, Tarasi
Sauers



Transition from MSMS to GMS

After a multi-year building renovation, Moss Side Middle School students and staff will be transitioning back to Gateway Middle School during the 2023-2024 school year.

As the district finalizes plans and identifies transition dates and times in the coming few weeks, we will be communicating this information with you through a parent letter via Skyward as well as posting it to our website and MSMS Facebook page.

Please disregard any information that has not been communicated or posted by the district at this time.



Arrival and Departure Procedures

Morning Arrival

- Student bus information will be posted to Skyward
- **Parent Drop-Off** will be from 8:00 - 8:15 am.
- **Parent Drop-Off** will occur at the covered walkway at Door 23 (front circle)
- Homeroom begins at 8:18 am. Students will be tardy after this time.

Afternoon Departure

- Student bus information will be posted to Skyward
 - **Parent Pick-Up** will begin at 2:58 pm.
 - **Parent Pick-Up** will occur around the back of the building, **behind the buses**
 - Traffic patterns will be clearly marked and monitored by police officers
 - Parent pick-up will be dismissed after the first wave of buses is released
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Attendance Procedures

Homeroom begins at 8:18 am. Students are tardy if arriving to their homeroom after this time.

Any student that arrives after the HR bell should enter the building at the main office. They will need to sign-in at the office kiosk for a late pass and proceed to their class.

Parents are encouraged to send excuses electronically to Ms. Lynnsey Oliver (loliver@gatewayk12.org) within three days. Any excuse returned to Ms. Oliver will be entered by Friday of that week.

The early dismissal process includes: an email to Ms. Oliver **OR** submitting a written note communicating your child's name and time of departure. Parents will sign their student out at the outdoor kiosk (will need their ID) and the student will be dismissed from the office. **All early dismissals need to occur prior to 2:15 pm.**



Grab-N-Go Breakfast

Upon arrival, students will be able to obtain a Grab-N-Go breakfast from different locations around the building.

- **Location #1** -- Breakfast cart outside of MSMS Gym
- **Location #2** -- Grab-N-Go from the cafeteria.

The district will be providing all students with free breakfast and lunch for the 2022-2023 school year.



Bell Schedule

| Bell Schedule | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Teacher Arrival | | 7:35 | |
| Student Arrival | | 8:00-8:15 | |
| Homeroom | | 8:18 - 8:25 | |
| Period 1 | | 8:28 - 9:10 | |
| Period 2 | | 9:13 - 9:55 | |
| Period 3 | | 9:58 - 10:40 | |
| 6th Grade | 8th Grade | 5th Grade | 7th Grade |
| Period 4 - Lunch | Period 4 | Period 4 | |
| 10:43 - 11:13 | 10:43 - 11:25 | 10:43 - 11:25 | |
| Period 5 | Period 5 - Lunch | Period 5 | |
| 11:16 - 11:58 | 11:28 - 11:58 | 11:28 - 12:10 | |
| Period 6 | Period 6 - Lunch | Period 6 | Period 6 |
| 12:01 - 12:43 | 12:13 - 12:43 | 12:13 - 12:43 | 12:13 - 12:55 |
| Period 7 | Period 7 | Period 7 | Period 7 - Lunch |
| 12:46 - 1:28 | 12:46 - 1:28 | 12:46 - 1:28 | 12:58 - 1:28 |
| Period 8 | 1:31 - 2:13 | | |
| Period 9 | 2:16 - 2:58 | | |
| Student Dismissal | 2:58 - 3:10 | | |
| Teacher Departure | 3:15 | | |



Student Sample Schedule

| PD. | 5th Grade | Cr. | 6th Grade | Cr. | 7th Grade | Cr. | 8th Grade | Cr. |
|-----|-------------------|------|----------------------|------|----------------------|--------|--------------------------|------|
| 1 | ELA | 1 | ELA | 1 | ELA | 1 | ELA | 1 |
| 2 | ELA | 1 | ELA | 1 | *Elective* | 1 | **ELA | 1 |
| 3 | S.S. | 1 | Science | 1 | *Elective* | 1 | S.S. | 1 |
| 4 | *Elective* | 1 | Lunch | | ELA | 1 | Science | |
| 5 | *Elective* | | Math | 1 | Science | 1 | Lunch | 1 |
| 6 | Lunch | | Math | 1 | S.S. | 1 | *Elective* | 1 |
| 7 | Science | 1 | S.S. | 1 | Lunch | | *Elective* | |
| 8 | Math | 1 | *Elective* | 1 | Math | 1 | Math | 1 |
| 9 | Math | 1 | *Elective* | 1 | Math** | 1 | **Math | |
| | P.E. | 0.25 | P.E. | 0.25 | P.E. | 0.25 | P.E. | 0.25 |
| | Music | 0.25 | Health | 0.25 | Fine Arts | 0.25 | Health | 0.25 |
| | Art | 0.25 | Art | 0.25 | Digital Fluency 7 | 0.25 | Coding and Design 8 | 0.25 |
| | Technology | 0.25 | Technology | 0.25 | Engineering 7 | 0.25 | Digital Fluency 8 | 0.25 |
| | Band/Orchestra | 1 | Band/Orchestra/Choir | 1 | Band/Orchestra/Choir | 1 | Band/Orchestra/Choir | 1 |
| | -OR- | | -OR- | | -OR- | | -OR- | |
| | Academic Advisory | | Academic Advisory | | STEAM 7 | 0.25 * | Engineering 8 | 0.25 |
| | | | | | Intro to Spanish | 0.25 | Fine Arts 8 | 0.25 |
| | | | | | Coding and Design 7 | 0.25 | FACS | 0.25 |
| | | | | | Academic Advisory | 0.25 | Academic Advisory | 0.25 |
| | | | | | **Math Lab | | **Math Lab | |
| | | | | | **Academic Advisory | | **Academic Advisory | |
| | | | | | **Robotics (Algebra) | | **Robotics II (Geometry) | |
| | | | | | | | **ELA Lab | |
| | | | | | | | **Foreign Language | |



Self-Guided Tours

Parents and students in Grades 5-8 will have the opportunity for self-guided tours.

Building maps will be available to allow for students and **one parent/guardian** to tour the school building. Students should bring their current schedule with them.

Tours should be **limited to 30 minutes** to provide all students with the opportunity to tour.

Principals and school counselors will be available throughout the building to answer questions

- *Wednesday, August 16th -- 9:00 am.-4:00 pm.*



Student Lockers

Every student will be assigned a district locker with a combination lock by their homeroom teacher.

Students will be permitted to go to their lockers at the following designated times of the school day:

- Beginning of the school day **prior** to homeroom
- Before/After lunch
- End of the school day

Students will need a teacher's pass to use their locker at any other time during the school day. They are **not permitted** to use their locker during class transitions.



Student Lunches

Students will eat their lunches by grade level. Each lunch period will be 30 minutes in length.

- 5th grade -- 12:08-12:38 pm.
- 8th grade -- 11:24-11:54 am.
- 6th grade -- 10:40-11:10 am.
- 7th grade -- 12:52-1:22 pm.

Breakfast and lunch menus will be posted to the school calendar monthly for your convenience.



Lunch Procedures

Students are assigned to a cafeteria based on homeroom. Their schedules will show Cafe 1 or Cafe 2 (mobile cafeteria).

Students who are assigned to Cafe 2 will report directly to the lunch line. Students in Cafe 1 will sit where assigned.

If students are required to leave the cafeteria (nurse, restroom, etc), all students must receive adult permission and sign out.

Teachers/Staff will dismiss students from the cafeteria by table.



Safety and Security

During student arrival, Moss Side Middle School will require students to move through **metal detectors** and complete a **bag check**.

MSMS will have 2-3 **School Resources Officers and/or Monitors** present throughout the course of the school day.

Common spaces within the building are secured with **video surveillance and footage** to assist with staff and student safety.

Bus safety includes similar video surveillance, which includes audio accounts of bus transportation.

Due to the new traffic patterns, we want to ensure all parents/guardians **follow direction provided by police as well as new street signs**.



Promotion Guidelines

If a student has not made satisfactory progress, a decision to promote or retain will be based upon a child's letter grade within his/her academic class.

Academic classes include: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and History/World Geography.

Students who fail 2 or more credits of core area classes may be retained in their current grade. Students will have an opportunity to retake failed academic classes in summer school.

Students failing all 4 academic classes are not eligible for summer school.



MSMS Communication

Moss Side Middle School will communicate with students and their families through a variety of different means.

In addition to letters and emails, the district will keep an up-to-date calendar in Skyward, utilize Skyblasts for important announcement and events, and provide positive news and photos on our MSMS Facebook page.

Be on the lookout for Parent Square, a new communication system that the district will be utilizing to communicate information with parents.

If you have any questions accessing Skyward, please contact the MSMS Office or the Technology Help Desk.



District Transportation

Bus/van transportation requires the same behavioral expectations that are enforced during school. Please be mindful that a failure to follow the rules on the bus/van will result in consequences including the removal of riding privileges.

A student may board the bus at their district assigned stop only.

Temporary bus passes are for daily use only and must receive administrative approval. Parents of both students must request permission for a student riding the bus home with a friend.

Please see the MSMS Handbook for more transportation information.



Discipline Code

Moss Side Middle School maintains a strict Code of Conduct to provide for a safe environment for all students and staff. We utilize a Positive Behavior Intervention System to reward students for following behavioral expectations on a regular basis.

When necessary based on a failure to adhere to our Code of Conduct, MSMS will utilize a number of disciplinary procedures in accordance with board policy, which may include lunch detention, hallway restriction, removal from athletic/extracurricular activities, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion. Students have the responsibility to make-up exams and work missed while being disciplined.



Dress Code

Students are required to follow the student dress code policy outlined within the Student Handbook. Below are a few reminders:

- Clothing that exposes any undergarments or areas of the body that include; midriff, lower back, and sides of the body
- No body sprays, colognes, or perfumes should be brought to school and/or kept in their lockers
- Any form of hats, caps, or hoods are not permitted in the building
- Sunglasses are not permitted to be worn on the face or head
- ***Earbuds/headphones*** should not be worn unless being used in class

Please refer to the handbook for more questions about dress code



Counseling Services

The school counselors conduct a preventive and developmental program aimed at helping each child realize his/her full potential. Counselors visit classrooms to assist teachers in identifying potential problems and becoming sensitive to specific children's needs. The child's total well-being (i.e., physical, social, emotional, mental and environmental) is considered when assessing the child's adjustment to the school experience. Although the major effort of the counseling service is to counsel students, the staff makes itself available to teachers, parents and school administrators for coordinating and consulting.



MSMS Communication Protocol

Problems are best solved at the level where they initially occur. To provide parents with proper information, it is recommended that discussion take place on a one-to-one basis with the person directly involved. To facilitate communications between the school community and home, there must be mutual support, trust, understanding and openness. The following guidelines are suggested for students and parents when questions and problems need to be addressed within the Gateway School District.

1. Contact the office secretary for dates/times of school events.
2. Contact a teacher and schedule a meeting or a telephone conference if there is an academic or other issue in the classroom.
3. Problems not resolved at the teacher level should be taken to a building principal.
4. Concerns not resolved through the above channels should be referred to the appropriate central office administrator.



Frequently Asked Questions for MSMS

Can my child participate in sports offered at Moss Side Middle School?

- *All 7th and 8th grade students in good academic and behavioral standing can participate in sports offered at MSMS. **Due to WPIAL restrictions, 5th and 6th grade students are not eligible to participate.***

Can my child participate in clubs and activities?

- ***All students in Grades 5 through 8** can participate in school activities and clubs. Information regarding clubs and activities will be on the morning announcements and noted on the weekly bulletins.*

What do I do if my child's device is broken and/or if he/she needs a device?

- *Families should contact the **Technology Help Desk at (412)373-5870** or by email at helpdesk@gatewayk12.org. You can also contact the school for more information. Teachers will be available to assist with minor technology issues during the school day.*



Frequently Asked Questions for MSMS

Can I send in birthday treats or balloons for my child?

- *Birthday/holiday treats are **not permitted** at Moss Side Middle School.*

How do I find out what activities/events are going on at the school?

- *All information and events that are occurring at the school will be communicated through Skyward, Moss Side Middle School's Facebook page and the Moss Side Middle School website.*

How does a visitor/parent gain access to the building?

- *For safety and security reasons, all individuals that are visiting MSMS need to scan their Photo ID and state their reason for the visit. Once permitted into Lobby, they will need to sign in and obtain a badge. Visitors will be escorted around the building by district personnel.*



Frequently Asked Questions for MSMS

Can I bring/deliver outside food for my child at lunch?

- *Outside food, such as McDonalds, Chick-Fil-A, etc. is **not permitted** in Moss Side Middle School.*

Are metal detectors used in the building?

- *Yes, we utilize metal detectors each morning to help ensure building safety. Students will have their backpacks/belongings searched by school personnel as well.*

How do I become involved in my child's school?

- *A strong bond between parents and school is paramount to a successful school year. Parental involvement is encouraged and appreciated. The easiest way to become involved is to become a member of the Family Teacher Organization (FTO). More information to join will be forthcoming.*



Frequently Asked Questions for MSMS

What school supplies does my child need this year?

- *Each individual teacher will provide your child with preferred supplies for their class. Some early suggestions would be binders, notebooks, filler paper, and pencils.*

Can my child have a cell phone in school?

- *Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school but they **MUST BE turned off** stored in their individual locker for the day. Failure to do so will result in the phone being confiscated and/or school discipline.*
- *Please do not text or call your child during the school day. If you would need to speak with your child, contact the main office.*
- *Students who are caught taking pictures and/or videos on school property, including buses, will receive school discipline as well as possible legal action.*