

# Learning About Middle School

## How is Middle School Different?

In lots of ways! For one thing, it may be much bigger than your old school. And you will have:

### *Different classes:*

- You will go to a different classroom for each subject.
- Some classes may be longer than others.
- You'll need to learn where each class is. Don't worry—you'll find your way in no time. ☺

### *New rules:*

- It's your responsibility to learn what the rules are. Read the student handbook.

### *A busier schedule:*

- You may have less time to get from one class to the next. You may also have a shorter lunch time.

### *Your very own locker:*

- Instead of having a desk to store your things in, you will have a locker.
- Remember, keep it neat and well organized and **never share your locker combination with anyone.**

### *More classmates:*

- There may be different students in every class you have.
- This is a great opportunity for you to make new friends.

### *More teachers:*

- You will have a different teacher for each class period.

### *More choices:*

- You can take part in extracurricular activities and sports.
- Pay close attention to morning announcements for important meeting dates and times.

### *More homework:*

- This is a part of your growing responsibility.

## Getting Organized is Your Ticket to Success

Here are some tips to help you get started:

- ¶ Your team teachers will help you organize all your materials.
- ¶ Use your agenda: Use it to keep track of when things are due. Take it to every class.

- ¶ Be sure you understand your assignments: If you have a question, ask! Other students may have the same question.
- ¶ Keep your locker neat: A messy locker can slow you down and make you late for class. Stopping to talk to friends at your locker can, too. Try to keep conversations brief.
- ¶ Make time for homework: Set up a special time each day. Then:
  - ▲ Find a quiet place to work. Make sure it has plenty of light. Get the supplies you need before you start.
  - ▲ During homework time do not take phone calls from friends.
  - ▲ Ask everyone not to disturb you.
- ¶ Break big projects into smaller ones: It can make a heavy workload easier to manage.
- ¶ Prepare the night before: It will save time in the morning. You should:
  - ▲ Check your agenda. Make sure you finish assignments that are due the next day.
  - ▲ Pack your schoolbag after you finish your homework.
  - ▲ Get your clothes ready before you go to bed.

### **Making New Friends**

You may feel a little lonely if you aren't in the same classes as your old friends. Here are some ideas for getting to know people:

- ✓ Be friendly: People are more likely to say hello to a friendly face. If someone smiles at you, smile back. Say hi and introduce yourself.
- ✓ Be a good listener: When you meet someone, show an interest in what the person likes to do. Ask questions, too.
- ✓ Get involved: It's a great way to make friends and meet interesting people. Join a team or club or do volunteer work.
- ✓ Be yourself: Trying to impress people usually backfires. Be honest about what you like to do. Remember, it's good to be different. 😊
- ✓ Improve your self-esteem: Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. You can build your self-esteem by setting goals, doing things you enjoy and taking pride in your efforts. High self-esteem can help you feel more confident when you meet others.
- ✓ Be a good friend: Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Everyone deserves respect.

## Learn About Peer Pressure

Negative peer pressure is when people try to get you to do things you don't want to do. Here are some things you can do to refuse peer pressure:

- ❖ Say no. Tell the person you don't want to.
- ❖ Leave. If you feel uncomfortable, walk away.
- ❖ Give a reason. You can say you:
  - Have to get to class
  - Promised to meet someone right after school
  - Don't want to get caught
- ❖ Remind yourself of the consequences. Breaking school rules can get you and your friends into serious trouble.

## Questions and Answers

*What if I feel too much stress?*

Talk to an adult you trust, such as: a parent, a teacher or a counselor. Talking about your problems is the first step toward solving them.

*What will the cafeteria be like?*

It may be bigger and seat more students. That's why it is a good place to meet people. Look for a friendly face or students you recognize from one of your classes. If you buy your lunch, spend wisely and make healthy choices. 😊

## Make the Most of Middle School!

- ✚ Get organized: Schedule time for homework and other activities.
- ✚ Try new things: Join a club or take a class that interests you.
- ✚ Meet new people: Get involved in school life.
- ✚ Avoid trouble: Stay away from people who pressure you to do bad or inappropriate things!
- ✚ Smile: We are glad that you are here!