



Universal Truth

from our little corner of the cosmos



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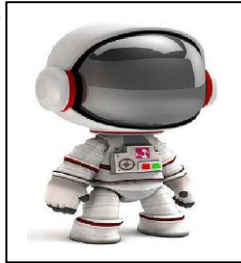
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Let the Journey Begin

Some new students are coming to the Silver Lake Regional School District in September. Do you know them? They enrolled in the middle school over the summer and they have had very little time to adjust to their new educational environment. Needless to say, they are nervous about their new school year.

As a new **Pathfinder***, you are probably a little nervous about your new school year too. Here are a few things that you will encounter as incoming seventh graders:

- a new school building
- new teachers (plural - teachers)
- students from different towns
- new school rules
- a new bus route/ride
- new school administrators
- different activities and clubs
- lockers!!!



To help you make the transition into middle school as easy as possible, the Pathfinder teachers want you to know that we will do everything we can to help you adjust. We will spend the first few days getting you acclimated to the new school and your new routine.

Did you figure out who the new, nervous students are? They are all of you, the young ladies and gentlemen of Halifax, Kingston, and Plympton who have been lucky enough to be selected for our team. Enjoy your summer and get ready for your middle school adventure.

* A Pathfinder is a member of team 7-1. It is also the name of a NASA mission to Mars where a landing craft and a rover were successfully set down on the planet. The Pathfinder teachers feel it is a very appropriate name because as young ladies and gentlemen you are entering a "new planet" in the exploration of your lives (called middle school) and we wish to help educate you to prepare for the many decisions you must face in your education and your life.

Who Are Your Teachers?

In the past, Silver Lake students were told only the last name of their new teachers and the subject that he or she taught.

To help you know who your team teachers are, the following list tells the subject, the teacher, and a phonetic spelling of the teacher's name.

- ancient history - Mr. Bracken (Brak - in)
- English Language Arts - Ms. Heneghan (Hen-again)
- inclusion - Mrs. Nastar (Nah - star)
- math - Mr. Basile (Ba - seal)
- science - Mrs. Young (Y-ung)
- Team Leader - Mrs. Andrews (Ann - droos)

Links to each of the teachers can be found at the school website:

slrms.slrsd.org

Other important information about the team as well as the school can be found at the school web site. It is worth checking out prior to your arrival to school. In fact, you might want to bookmark it for future reference.

What is Appropriate to Wear to School?

The Silver Lake educational community asks that all students come to school dressed neatly, cleanly, appropriately, and modestly.

What's Inappropriate to Wear at school?

To best answer this question you (and your parents/guardians) should read the student handbook, pages 14-15. The dress code is clearly stated on those pages.

Are You Ready?

In addition to supplies suggested to you by the school administration, here's what you will need in your core subject areas to be ready for a successful start to your seventh grade middle school experience...



ancient history - a two-pocket folder, pencils, and a sturdy three ring binder of any size (the binder is to be kept in the classroom and must contain either a one-subject notebook OR loose leaf paper)

English Language Arts - a two-pocket folder, a yearlong supply of pencils, and erasers.

math - a two-pocket folder, a year long supply of pencils, and a basic calculator (a fraction calculator would be better but is NOT allowed on the MCAS). Sorry, cell phone calculators are not allowed.

science – a three ring binder with one divider, loose leaf paper, colored pencils, and index cards (ruled or not)

SSR - a reading book of your choice (visit your local library for some great books)

The team has several locker breaks throughout the course of the day to ensure students do not carry a large quantity of materials at one time. In fact, we would prefer our students carry as little as possible but if you want to carry three inch or larger three ring binders to hold multiple subjects, you're welcome to.

Other classes (world language, health, etc.) may also request that students have additional supplies.

Backpacks are not allowed for use in school. They may be used for transporting materials to and from school but not for class-to-class transportation.

Notes About Homework

- Each of your teachers WILL be assigning homework.
- Homework will count towards your term grade.
- You WILL get homework on some weekends and possibly vacations.
- Each teacher will have expectations on homework like "homework must be done in pencil" or "homework will not be accepted late".
- **Homework is not punishment. It is practice for what you are learning in school.**
- Students who fail to do homework regularly often do poorly on classwork, tests, and quizzes.

"Can We Talk?"

In middle school, students are expected to assume more responsibility for themselves. This kind of independence can seem scary at first, so the team teachers will let parents and students know how they (the students) are doing before report cards are issued.

Some of the ways teachers may communicate with you include: Power School (an on-line grade program that allows you to monitor your child's grades), web pages, mid-term progress reports, phone calls, notes in the student agenda, individual, informal student conferences, team parent meetings, and/or email.

During the school year, you may find that students need help handling these new responsibilities. What can they do? Here are several things former seventh graders have done that have proven useful: review grades posted on Power School, check web pages, staying after school for extra help (Late nights are held on Mon., Tues., & Thus. Afternoons and conclude at 2:20 P.M. Some clubs and detentions last until 3:00 P.M.), seeing the guidance counselor, asking questions in class, organizing papers and notebooks, talking to parents, talking to teachers before or after school, and/or having a "study buddy."