

# Room 401 Newsletter

Middle School

April 2018

## Class news: **Save the Date!!**

The last parent meeting of the year for the Title 1 Program is **April 26, 6:00-6:30**. We will meet in Room 401 This is being held in conjunction with the Spring Showcase. Your feedback on how we are doing is important. Please come!



## Inspire your middle schooler to work hard and succeed in school

A motivated student is a dedicated student. To inspire your middle schooler to do well in school:

- Stay involved in his education. Show you care about the things your child is learning in class. Your involvement shows that his education matters to you.
- Help him get organized. It's tough to stay motivated when notes and assignments are scattered all over the place. So help your child sort and file things by subject.
- Nurture his curiosity. Learning happens everywhere, not just in class. Encourage your child to explore outside interests. If he likes art, for example, check out a new exhibit together.
- Offer feedback. When you see your child working hard, let him know that you notice! If he does well on a project or a test, talk about how much his effort has paid off.
- Be patient with him. Chances are, you're not always motivated at work. So don't expect your child to be forever gung-ho about school. Instead, assume he'll have periods when he's less than enthusiastic. But with your support, he'll likely get back on track soon.

## Are you still emphasizing attendance?

April often heralds the return of warmer days. But it's not summer vacation yet—and your child needs to be in school, on time, until it is.

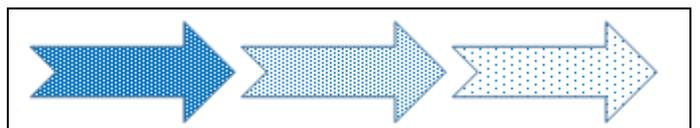
Answer yes or no to the questions below to see if you are doing all you can to promote regular, on-time school attendance:

1. Have you made it clear that attending school is your child's first priority through the end of the year?
2. Do you avoid taking your child out of school unless he is sick or it is an emergency?
3. Do you emphasize to your child that your family does not condone skipping school?
4. Do you encourage your child to take steps that will get him to school on time, like using an alarm clock?
5. Do you work with the school to make sure you are alerted if your child is not in school?

### How well are you doing?

Mostly yes answers mean you are conveying the importance of attendance to your child. For no answers, try those ideas.

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## Three skills help students prepare for college & career

Your middle schooler may not know what he wants to do after he graduates from high school. That's years away! However, there are some skills he can start building now that will help him be successful—whatever his future plans may be. They include:

1. **Communication.** From factory floors to hospital operating rooms, on-the-job success depends on communication. You can help your child strengthen his speaking and listening skills at home. If he wants you to rethink a rule, have him build a case and present it to you. Why does he want to stay out later next Friday? How has he shown he is responsible enough for this change?
2. **Critical thinking and problem solving.** Middle schoolers often see things they'd like to change. There's a school policy that doesn't seem fair. Their team needs new uniforms, but the school lacks the budget. Instead of just listening to your child complain, help him think about how he could help solve the problem. Perhaps he can share his idea with the principal.
3. **Decision making.** Suppose your child is wondering if he should sign up for an honors math class next year. To help him think through the choice, make a T chart. Have him put the reasons for on one side and the reasons against on the other. When he sees the pros and cons, he can make a more informed choice.

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## Help your middle schooler develop a sense of respect

You make a point of respecting your child, but do you insist that she show you respect, too? If not, now is the time to start.

To develop your child's sense of respect for you, herself and others:

- Don't let her run the show. Does your home life revolve around her activities, achievements and desires? It shouldn't. If her needs always come first, she may not learn to respect the notion that other people have needs, too.
- Hold your applause. It's fine to congratulate your child when she does well, but don't gush over every accomplishment. Instead, save your highest praise for when your child works hard.
- Allow her to experience disappointment. You can't spare your child from all of life's troubles, nor should you. Whether it's being cut from the volleyball team or failing to earn an A in math, she needs to learn to take her lumps. Besides, they're hers—not yours. So give her a hug and let her move past it. She'll likely respect herself for bouncing back—and respect you for showing her she could.

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