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Welcome to Draper Middle School!

This guidebook has been developed to give parents and students useful information that will help everyone navigate the middle school years with confidence and greater success.

There is no “secret” to doing well in school. You’ll find an overview of our academic program on the following pages.

Hang on to this guide and you’ll probably find yourself coming back to it when questions or problems arise. If we left something out that would be useful for parents or students to know, please tell us so that we can include it in future handbooks. You can call editor Adrienne Leon at 356-8250 or e-mail her at aleon@mohonasen.org. Please also keep in mind that the information contained in this guide is subject to change.

KEY CONTACTS AT DRAPER

MIDDLE SCHOOL FACULTY BY DEPARTMENT
All teachers have voice mail. Parents who wish to contact a teacher should call the school’s main number (356-8350) and ask to be connected with the teacher’s voice mail.

Principal
Debra Male
356-8350

Assistant Principal
Scott Hays
356-8351

Deans of Students
Matthew Rider
Lisa Carnibucci
356-8352

Guidance Counselors
Kyra Grimsley
Angie Santabara
Debbie Wood
356-8370

School Psychologist
Betty Young
356-8361

School Social Worker
Larry McGrath
356-8375

School Librarian
Mary Manno
356-8380

School Nurse
Jeanette Greklek
356-8360

Director of School Safety & Security
Jeffrey Jackson
356-8355

Art
Steve Blais
Rachel Empie

English
Melyssa Burega
Kim Coelho
Lisa Daviero
Erin Degnan
Cheryl Donovan
Laura Gallelli
Rachel Geracitano
Faith Giordano
Danielle Grainer
Jeff Hayes
Erika Pangburn
Rose Sharp
Esther Vrooman

Foreign Language
FRENCH:
Maureen Geagan
SPANISH:
Linda Brenn
Maria Pacheco

Family and Consumer Science
Jennifer Fritz-Walbroehl
Amy Stott

Health/Physical Education
Andy Cuthbertson
Melissa Gregg
Douglas Hallberg
Ray Kearney
Nicole Schaap

Mathematics
Terri Black
Paul Browne
Kevin Cummings
Larry Fine
Renee Gandrow
Lisa Carnibucci
Mary Ann Nickloy
Matt Rider
Rebecca Sokolowski
Brenda Stahl
Susan Weinberg

Science
Paul Browne
Kim Coelho
Katie Donnan
Larry Fine
Laura Gallelli
Joanna Keith
Carolyn Lundy
Jenna Niles
Brenda Stahl

Social Studies
Paul Browne
Mark DiCocco
Cheryl Donovan
Faith Giordano
Fred Saccocio
Rebecca Sokolowski
William Van Wie
Dale Wade-Keszey
Josh Whipple

Music
Nicole Gabriel
Daniel Jones
Kim Kondenar
Gail Sparlin
Sherri Strichman
Jason Varga

Special Education
Elaine Asselin
Kelly Fahrenkopf
Jennifer Fahsel
Lori Giattino
Amanda Rider
William Van Wie (Alt. Ed.)

Technology
Mark Lajeunesse
John Winters
District-wide Phone Directory

MOHONASEN DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS
Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Kathleen Spring
356-8200
kspring@mohonasen.org

Assistant Superintendent for Business
Christopher Ruberti
356-8210
rubertich@mohonasen.org

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Lisa Cutting
356-8205
lcutting@mohonasen.org

Director for Special and Alternative Education
Karla Empie
356-8221
kempie@mohonasen.org

Academic Administrator for Literacy
Michele Whitley
356-8345
mwhelley@mohonasen.org

Academic Administrator for Science
Makensie Bullinger
356-8254
mbullinger@mohonasen.org

Administrator on Special Assignment for APPR
Diane McIver
356-8200
dmciiver@mohonasen.org

OTHER DISTRICT CONTACTS
Aquatics Program Supervisor
Marc Vachon
356-8240

Business Office Supervisor/District Treasurer
Tracey Freemantle
356-8230

Central Registrar
Terrie Furbeck
356-8222

Communications Coordinator
Adrienne Leon
356-8250

Continuing Education Coordinator
Patricia Hopkins
356-8303

Director of Facilities
Joseph Mayo
356-8228

Director of PE, Athletics & Health Education
TBD
356-8270

Food Service Program Supervisor
Kimberly Gagnon
356-8225

Transportation Department Supervisor
Randy Jerrel
356-8260

MOHONASEN’S FOUR SCHOOLS
Bradt Primary School (Grades K-2)
2719 Hamburg Street
Schenectady, NY 12303
Michele Whiteley, Interim Principal
356-8400

Pinewood Intermediate School (Grades 3-5)
901 Kings Road
Schenectady, NY 12303
Deborah Kavanaugh, Principal
356-8430

Draper Middle School (Grades 6-8)
2070 Curry Road
Schenectady, NY 12303
Debra Male, Principal
356-8350

Mohonasen High School (Grades 9-12)
2072 Curry Road
Schenectady, NY 12303
David Collins, Principal
356-8301
What is Middle School?

**IMPORTANCE OF MIDDLE SCHOOL AND DRAPER’S PHILOSOPHY**

Middle School represents one of the most important transitions in a student’s academic career since the transition from home to school, way back in kindergarten. Think about it - students enter middle school as products of their elementary school environment - and when they leave in three short years, they are expected to be high schoolers!

Our philosophy of education here at Draper Middle School is:

- All students, regardless of ability, will demonstrate academic proficiency (as a minimum).
- All teachers will provide a nurturing environment supported by interdisciplinary lessons.
- Community members will serve as mentors and tutors, imparting their particular area of expertise, skills and knowledge sets to students.
- Visitors to Draper will see students engaged in collaborative and relevant activities.
- All will work in an environment fostering student efficacy and academic success as our goals for all.

Middle School is intended to provide students with a solid foundation in the core curriculum subjects of math, English language arts, science, and social studies, as well as providing opportunities for experiencing exploratory subjects such as home & careers, technology, foreign language, and the arts. Physical education and health are also cornerstones of the middle school experience.

Accountability is important at DMS. Just as the school and its teachers are accountable to the New York State Education Department, we expect our students to be accountable as well. We do this by holding the students accountable for their own success.

Because DMS emphasizes mastery of the core subjects and exploratory content, all subjects have “Success Indicators” that must be completed as evidence of understanding.
Part 1: Success Indicators

Every class that Draper students are enrolled in has Success Indicators. These are the assignments, tests and projects that MUST be completed satisfactorily in order to receive credit for the course. It’s as simple as that. The grade that the student earns above passing will depend on the timeliness and quality of the work. If a student does not pass the course for the quarter or semester, he or she is placed on Academic Probation. At this point, the student has five weeks to make up the missing/unsatisfactory Success Indicators. If they are not completed, the failing grade for the marking period stands. If the missing/unsatisfactory assignments are completed, the grade received will be averaged in for that marking period.

frequently asked... Questions

How will parents know what the Success Indicators are?

A good rule of thumb is for parents to think back to when they went to school. If an assignment is a quiz, test or project, then it is probably a Success Indicator. If you’re not sure, please e-mail the teacher or contact the Guidance Department at 356-8371.

Can the Success Indicator be a test or quiz?

If a student does not pass that test or quiz, there will be complete instructions on how the student can satisfactorily complete the test or quiz. We cannot allow the student to simply fail the test and move past it. He/she must work to demonstrate at least a basic understanding of the material presented in the course.

Do all classes have Success Indicators?

At DMS, core area (math, ELA, science, social studies and foreign language) and special areas (music, art, home & careers, etc.) have Success Indicators. Students have ample opportunity to make up assignments during Advisory and afterschool.

What if a student is failing at the end of the quarter?

A student who receives a failing grade on his or her report card will be placed on Academic Probation. Students on Academic Probation are required to stay after school for a two-hour work session (2:15-4:15 p.m.) once per week until the assignments are satisfactorily completed. If work is not made up in a timely manner (5 weeks into the next marking period), the previous grade or zero is factored into the student’s quarterly average.

How does a student get taken off Academic Probation?

A student comes off Academic Probation by successfully completing all missing assignments.

What if a student fails a course?

If a student ultimately fails a core-area class (math, ELA, science, social studies, foreign language), he or she will be required to retake the course during the six-week summer school session. For students who fail non-core area classes, students will have to make up the missing/incomplete Success Indicators for those courses.

What if the Success Indicators are too hard for the student?

All of the Success Indicators are designed to prepare students to meet the 6th-8th grade standards set forth by New York State. We are mandated by New York State to assist every student to meet these standards. If the Success Indicators are too hard, we provide assistance in the form of:

• After-school help/weekly A.P. detentions
• Academic Intervention Services (AIS)
• Special Education Services (if qualified)
• Alternative Middle School Program
• Peer Tutoring
Part 2: Character Education

At Draper Middle School, character education is a way to support students in making responsible and life-changing choices. While we want to foster independence, we also want to ensure that students have the tools necessary to make good decisions. One of the key ideas school leaders focus on at this level is that “with freedom, comes responsibility.” Therefore, through the daily DMS Television Morning Show broadcasts, as well as daily interactions in the classrooms and hallways, Draper staff members focus on modeling and encouraging positive traits throughout the school year. These traits include:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Attitude
- Perseverance
- Service
- Teamwork
- Mindfulness

We also use many of the lessons in the book “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens” by Sean Covey. There are many copies of the book available throughout the school. Parents may sign out a copy for reading and reinforcement at home.

The Mohonasen Central School District and Draper MS have also implemented practices and policies in order to comply with the Dignity for All Students Act, which took effect on July 1, 2012. The goal of this state law is to provide students with a safe, supportive educational environment that is free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment and bullying (including cyberbullying). Some of the law requirements include establishing anti-harassment and discrimination policies, creating school training programs and including a course in civility, citizenship and character education in the curriculum for every grade level. For more information, please visit www.mohonasaen.org.
As we require success of all students, it becomes critical that we have a plan for helping individual students who are struggling with success. While the 7 Habits mentioned on page 9 can give students the personal tools needed to become more effective and successful students, there are often problems and situations that fall outside the student’s circle of control. Some students may struggle due to external circumstances, barriers that prevent them from reaching success. Others may struggle because there are services or assistance that they need, but are not receiving. Even the strongest of students may have a time when external variables are impacting their ability to succeed. For this reason we have developed the Child Success Team. The team consists of a group of educators and professionals within the school, each of whom has his or her own area of expertise. The team is charged with pooling members’ expertise and resources to remove the barriers and bridge the gaps that are preventing individual students from succeeding academically, socially, and behaviorally. The team meets on a daily basis to develop a plan for the success of any student referred to the team. Referrals to the team can be made by parents, teachers or administration. For more information about the Child Success Team, or to make a referral to the team, please call your son’s or daughter’s Guidance Counselor at 356-8370.

Members of the Child Success Team:

- Administrators
- Guidance Counselors
- School Resource Officer
- School Social Worker
- School Nurse
- School Psychologist
- Outside agencies
A “CRASH COURSE” IN DRAPER’S BLOCK SCHEDULE

Draper Middle School operates on a modified 80-minute “block schedule” with core subjects (math, English, science and social studies) meeting every other day for 80 minutes. Here are some key things to know about Draper's block schedule:

THE SCHEDULE FOLLOWS AN ALTERNATING CYCLE: A day; B day; C day and D day. There are signs posted around the school to remind you what day it is in the cycle. Monthly schedules are posted online. Note: The schedule is planned around scheduled holidays. If a snow day falls on an A day, the next day is an A day.

HOMEROOM runs from 7:36 to 7:44 a.m. for all students (morning announcements)
- Period 1-2: 7:48 to 9:08 a.m.
- Period 3-4: 9:12 to 10:34 a.m.
- Period 5: 10:38 to 11:19 a.m.
- Period 6: 11:19 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Period 7: 12 p.m. to 12:41 p.m.
- Period 8-9: 12:45 p.m. to 2:10 p.m.

FOR GRADE 6: Periods 1-2, 6-7 & 8-9 are 80-minute instructional periods. Periods 3-4 alternate an advisory period (AC days) with a class (BD days), with lunch scheduled for period 5.

FOR GRADES 7: Periods 1-2, 3-4 & 8-9 are 80-minute instructional periods. Periods 5 and 7 alternate an advisory period (BD days) with a class (AC days), with lunch scheduled for period 6.

FOR GRADES 8: Periods 1-2, 3-4 & 6/7-8 are 80-minute instructional periods. Periods 5 and 9 alternate an advisory period (AC days) with a class (BD days), with lunch scheduled for period 6/7.

ADVISORY PERIOD takes place during periods 3-4 (AC days) for grade 6, periods 5 and 7 (BD days) for grade 7, and periods 5 and 9 (AC days) for grade eight. Advisory is a time for students to get extra help from teachers, start homework assignments, make up past-due work and/or do some free reading. This is also the time when our band, choir, orchestra and AIS Labs are offered.

PERIOD 10 is held after the regular school day Tuesday through Friday from 2:10-2:50 p.m. Busing is provided at 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday ONLY.

This is a designated time for:
- » Additional academic help, when needed, with teachers;
- » Scheduled meetings of school clubs and other extracurricular activities;
- » Homework, particularly for student athletes;
- » Detention, if assigned; and
- » Parent-teacher conferences.

BE ON TIME TO CLASS! There are only four minutes between the end of one class and the start of another. In many cases you will not have time to stop at your locker, so plan accordingly. If you get detained by a teacher, ask for a pass. Otherwise, if you’re not in your class by the time the bell rings, you are tardy.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SCHEDULE? Don’t be afraid to ask a teacher or a friend or to stop by the Guidance Office for help deciphering your schedule.
Middle School Map
Finding your way around Draper Middle School
For many kids, preadolescence can be a time of upheaval. Puberty kicks in, peer pressure becomes a significant factor, and new relationships take on major importance as children pull farther away from their families. With all this going on for preteens, is it any wonder that their desire to focus on academics might wane?

Studies show that many children’s grades drop during the first year of middle school. It’s at this point that students sometimes become less interested in studying and less self-assured about their abilities.

Yet today’s students are facing more rigorous academic standards and tougher high school graduation requirements than ever before. All students in grades 3-8 must take state exams in English and math, while fourth and eighth graders also take a state science exam. Poor performance on any of these exams is a “red flag” for more serious problems in high school. Parents should get involved IMMEDIATELY if their child is doing poorly in middle school.

In addition, under the Regents Reform Agenda, state standards are changing with the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. As a result, literacy and math skills will become a more central focus in all subject areas, as will college and career readiness skills.

According to the New York State Education Department, a quality middle school program should offer academics that are comprehensive, challenging, purposeful, integrated, relevant and standards based. They also say that a middle school should have a philosophy and mission that reflect the intellectual and developmental needs and characteristics of children who are 10-14 years old. This is what we try to do at Draper Middle School and we hope that all parents will assist us in our efforts.

So how do you, as a parent, spark an interest in academics when Sponge Bob Square Pants is your child’s guru? Or the lure of hanging out with friends dwarfs all interest in school work? The ideas at right take time but they’ve worked for many parents – and they can work for you, too!

» Be a positive role model. When talking about your own work, emphasize not only the frustrations, but also the satisfactions that go along with reaching a goal or finishing a tough job. This is a great way to show your children that achievement has its rewards. Too many kids think school success comes from being “born smart” – instead of from hard work.

» Give your children lots of support. Although the middle years are a time when children crave more independence, they still need daily encouragement and clear expectations from their parents. Let them know that struggling with a task is not necessarily a bad thing.

» Tap into your child’s interests. Subscribe to a preteen or sports magazine to promote reading. Build research skills by using the Internet together to plan a vacation or learn more about a favorite musician. Visit museums, bookstores, theaters, etc. Enjoy cooking? Do some research and host ethnic theme dinners with family or friends. Be creative; show your kids that learning can be fun!

» Make school the topic of daily conversations. Ask questions of your children and their teachers, participate in school activities and check on homework, test grades, etc.

Academically Speaking...

THE “MIDDLE YEARS” LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL
ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES (AIS)
The faculty and staff at Draper Middle School are committed to helping all students succeed in challenging course work. A wide range of Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are provided to students who are not on track to meet the new Regents requirements for graduation.

For example, students falling below state standards in English language arts and/or math will be scheduled for ELA/math every day. Extra help may also be provided by remedial teachers within a regular class or during advisory.

Students who are in serious academic jeopardy may also be placed in smaller classes for English, math, science and social studies (18 students or less) where they have more time on tasks and more concentrated supports. Counseling services are also available to help at-risk students deal with peripheral issues that may be getting in the way of their school success.

If you would like more information about Mohonasen's AIS programs or wonder whether or not your child qualifies, call your school principal or guidance counselor.

ADVISORY
In the middle school block schedule, all students have an 80-minute advisory period every other day. For grade 6, this time is scheduled for periods 3-4 on A/C days. For grades seven and eight it alternates (see schedule on page 11).

This time is a much-improved alternative to the old practice of mass “study halls” where very little studying ever took place. Instead, students are now assigned to a particular classroom and teacher for their advisory period. However, students don’t necessarily stay in that classroom for their entire advisory period. In practice, advisory time is meant to be flexible and accommodating to students’ needs and interests.

Advisory is a time when:
• Students can arrange to meet with any of their teachers for extra help.
• Students can get a start on homework assignments or make up past-due work.
• Students in the band, choir or orchestra programs practice and perform as a group.
• Students can relax and enjoy some time for free reading.
• Living Environment labs meet.

AWARDS AND AWARDS CEREMONIES
The achievements of Draper Middle School students are recognized annually.

In 6th and 7th grade, students are recognized at the classroom level.

In 8th grade, all students are recognized at the 8th Grade Moving-Up Ceremony each June. The date, time and location of this event is published in the annual district calendar, which is mailed home at the start of each school year. It can also be found online.

CHARACTER EDUCATION
Mohonasen works in partnership with parents to maintain an environment that will reflect and reinforce core ethical values such as honesty, tolerance, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of laws and rules, courtesy and dignity. Students are strongly encouraged to get involved in the many school sponsored clubs, activities and service projects that support positive character development.

COURSE OF STUDY
The course of study is generally the same within each grade level. Students who opt to participate in musical groups do so during advisory periods. Honors/Challenge courses are also offered in certain subjects for academically advanced students. (See page 15).
**COURSE WEIGHTING**

Several middle school courses are weighted. This means that certain higher level courses will be multiplied by 1.025. For example, a grade of an 80 in Challenge English language arts would be multiplied by 1.025 and would calculate as an 82. This weighted grade would be used toward the student’s weighted GPA and would also be used for honor roll and honor society eligibility.

Course weighting pertains to all Challenge courses at Draper, as well as the Living Environment and Algebra Regents courses (for accelerated 8th graders). Regents courses are counted toward a student’s HS GPA.

**CURRICULUM MAPS**

Parents and students can get a good idea of what will be taught in each class (and when) by reviewing curriculum maps for the core subjects of English/language arts, math, science and social studies.

These maps will evolve over time, reflecting continuous efforts to refine and improve curriculum, district-wide.

**DROPPING A COURSE**

There are no “elective” courses in the middle school course of study, so courses may not be dropped.

The only exception is for accelerated eighth graders enrolled in high school biology or math. Those students may drop the accelerated course and enroll in the regular eighth-grade course for math and/or science – provided they meet the following requirements. Parents should contact their child’s guidance counselor to learn more.

**HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

Homebound instruction – or home tutoring – is a service schools are required to provide to students who are unable to attend school due to medical, emotional or disciplinary problems.

Middle school students who qualify for homebound instruction may receive two hours of home tutoring per subject up to 10 hours per week for all subjects.

If the inability to attend school is due to a medical condition, parents should call their child’s guidance counselor as soon as possible and provide a written medical request for homebound instruction from the child’s physician. The counselor will then submit the doctor’s note along with additional paperwork to the superintendent of schools for approval of home tutoring.

Once approval is given, the counselor will secure tutors for each of the child’s core subjects. The turnaround time between providing the doctor’s note to the counselor and tutors contacting the family is generally 48 hours.

**HOMWORK**

(Also see pages 19 & 22)

Homework helps students practice and reinforce what they learned in class. It also teaches self discipline, time-management skills and responsibility.

According to district guidelines, middle schoolers should be spending – on average – one to two hours on homework and/or reading daily.

It is the responsibility of each student to find out and complete homework assignments – even when absent from school. With a little planning and follow-through, students can avoid falling behind. For example:

- Find a reliable friend in each class that you can call if you have a question about the homework, need to copy notes that you missed, etc. (Offer to do the same for him or her, too!)
- Get in the habit of writing down the week’s assignments in the student agenda book.
- Know each teacher’s rules (including deadlines!) for making up missed class work.
- Students are encouraged to use advisory periods and Period 10 if they have questions or have missed work due to an absence. In some cases a student may be scheduled to remain after school with the teacher to complete past due homework. If this request is made, it takes precedence over all other school activities.
- Students who will be absent for several days can call the Guidance Office to get homework worksheets. Allow 24 hours before pick up.
- Students who need to be out of school for an extended period, may – with a doctor’s note – be eligible for home tutoring.

**HONORS CLASSES**

All incoming students in grades six, seven and eight are annually evaluated for eligibility to participate in the middle school’s “Challenge” classes.

These classes are for academically advanced students who meet specific requirements in those subjects. Criteria includes high standardized test scores.

continued on next page
scores, strong classroom performance, teacher and guidance counselor recommendation and the child’s desire to participate in a more demanding program.

Challenge English language arts (ELA) and science are offered to students in grades seven and eight. Challenge math is offered at all three grade levels.

The Challenge math class in grade 8 is the same course typically offered to high school freshmen. Accelerated 8th graders take the Integrated Algebra Regents Exam in June of their 8th grade year – one year ahead of schedule.

Similarly, the 8th grade honors science curriculum is the high school-level biology course leading to the Living Environment Regents exam at the end of grade 8. Students who pass this exam earn one high school science credit.

**HONOR ROLL**

Four times each year, after report cards are issued, an honor roll is released based upon grades received during the preceding quarter. All classes with numeric grades are counted when computing honor roll standings.

- **HIGH HONOR ROLL** will be awarded to students who achieve a grade point average of 94.5 or above.
- **HONOR ROLL** will be awarded to students who achieve a grade point average of 94.4 to 94.5.

Certificates are provided each quarter to students who achieve either honor roll or high honor roll status. The honor roll and high honor roll are also posted on Mohonasen’s website.

**JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

Membership in Draper Middle School’s National Junior Honor Society is open to 7th and 8th graders.

To be eligible for induction, students must meet established academic criteria. Students who meet the criteria will receive letters in March inviting them to apply for membership. Application also requires participating in at least two school and/or community activities and teacher recommendations.

A special induction ceremony is held each spring and parents are invited to attend.

**LIBRARY**

Draper Middle School’s library is open during school hours: 7:30 a.m. to 2:50 p.m. The library has a good assortment of books, magazines, newspapers and encyclopedias – as well as 15 computers for students to use when working on school projects.

Students are welcome to use the library during advisory or during the after-school activity period from 2:14 to 2:50 daily.

Draper’s library webpage is set up to help students with on-line research and provides access to the online library catalog.

Students may borrow up to four books and/or magazines at any given time. Students are also invited to stop in and renew a book if they haven’t finished reading it by the time it’s due.

All students are responsible for the materials they borrow. Please do not loan them to others!

**MUSIC LESSONS**

Students who participate in band and orchestra take small group lessons during the regular school day. Lessons are scheduled on a rotating basis to avoid conflicts with any one class. Students must report to their regular classroom teacher first, before going to a scheduled lesson. Students are also responsible for completing missed classroom assignments when they are pulled out for a music lesson.

Band, orchestra and choir students meet regularly to practice and perform as a group. Large group sessions are always scheduled to coincide with advisories.

Students are given monthly schedules, in advance, for both lessons and large group sessions. It is recommended that students record the dates and times in their assignment books to avoid forgetting!

Music students are required to keep their instruments in lockers in the music room.

**PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents may make appointments for conferences with teachers and/or their child’s guidance counselor by calling Draper’s Guidance Office (356-8370) any time they have questions or concerns. School officials may also call parents to request a conference as needed.

If a parent or student is unhappy with an interim report or report card, a conference can help get at the root of the problem.

A conference is also a good opportunity to set up an improvement plan – for behavior and/or academics. In almost all instances, students will be expected to participate.

Guidance counselors can also set up and facilitate a group conference involving one or more teachers. The focus is always on problem-solving – not playing a “blame game.”

Most people, including students, say they feel relieved at the end of a conference. That’s because once the nature of the problem is clearly understood, it’s much easier to address it – particularly when everyone is working together.

continued on next page
Keep in mind things don’t have to be desperate before parents step in. Any drop in grades is a good reason to call the school.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All students take physical education (PE) classes. Classes meet once every four days for 80 minutes. Students receive a pass or fail grade based on their participation, attendance, effort, citizenship and skill development.

The main focus of the middle school physical education program is on developing an understanding of physical fitness and cultivating life-long fitness habits.

Appropriate dress for PE classes includes sneakers, T-shirts, shorts or sweatpants.

**SWIMMING AND PE**

All middle school students take part in an annual co-ed swimming unit at the high school pool. Girls must wear one-piece bathing suits; swim trunks with a lining are required for boys. No cut-off jeans or two-piece suits are allowed. White T-shirts may be worn over bathing suits and girls can also wear nylon shorts over their suits. Students must supply their own towels. Flip flops and goggles are recommended, but not required.

**TEAM BUILDING AND PE**

All students take part in an annual team building/cooperative activities unit in their physical education classes. The focus is on building interpersonal and team problem-solving skills. In grades seven and eight, the team building unit culminates with students climbing Draper’s popular “rock wall” and taking on other high elements that challenge students in nontraditional ways.

**MEDICAL EXCUSES AND PE**

Students who are unable to participate in physical education for any reason will need a signed note stating their limitations from their doctor. Students will be given a zero grade for each missed day unless they submit this written medical excuse to the school nurse (not the PE teacher). If a student ends the school year with a medical excuse, he or she needs to submit either a new excuse or a release note from their physician for the next school year.

**PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS**

There are four marking periods in the regular school year. Report cards are available online, through SchoolTool, a few weeks after the close of each marking period. Interim reports are available in SchoolTool approximately halfway through each marking period. Combined, parents can expect to access eight reports, all through SchoolTool, on their child’s progress in a typical school year. In addition, teachers will update grades and attendance information in SchoolTool on a regular basis.

**STANDARDIZED TESTS**

In grades six, seven and eight, students take the New York State tests in math and English/language arts.

Eighth graders also take a proficiency exam in French or Spanish, as well as a NYS science exam. These exams measure whether or not a student is on-track to achieve the challenging Regents requirements in high school.

Parents are advised to pay close attention to their child’s standardized test results. These are shared with parents annually.

If a child is having difficulty – and many are – parents should not wait until high school to get actively involved. Academic Intervention Services are provided to students in serious academic jeopardy, but parent support on the home-front is just as important. Call your guidance counselor and request a meeting if you have concerns about your child’s performance or questions about what you can do, at home, to help your child be successful.

**REQUESTS/NON-REQUESTS FOR TEACHERS**

Requests for particular teachers cannot be honored since there are too many scheduling variables to consider and such requests could create imbalances in class sizes. Students are assigned to “teams” of teachers, not to one particular teacher.

If a parent or student has had a negative past experience with a particular teacher, a non-request may be submitted to the guidance office.

Where appropriate and scheduling permits, the school will do its best to honor such requests.
SUMMER READING

All students entering grades six through eight are required to complete a summer reading assignment. Details about the reading assignment are generally sent home in June and can also be found on the web at www.mohonases.org.

TUTORS

Students or parents who wish to obtain a private professional tutor can contact their guidance counselor for the names of qualified tutors in various subject areas. The cost generally runs between $20-30 per hour.

Another option – that has no cost – is to request a peer tutor. National Junior Honor Society students are often willing to tutor other classmates in need of additional help. High school-age tutors can also be arranged. Contact your guidance counselor for details.

FYI:
Keep these in your locker...

- Draper students are not allowed to wear hats during the school day or carry iPods, hand-held video games or mp3 players.
- Backpacks need to be stored inside lockers during school hours.
- If you have a cell phone, it has to be turned off and stored in your locker during school hours.

MOHONASEN PARENT ACCESS: SCHOOLTOOL

For the 2014-2015 school year, all middle school parents can continue to use SchoolTool to access their child’s attendance, academic and discipline records online. The middle school has gone “paperless,” meaning that interim reports and report cards are available only through SchoolTool (they will no longer be mailed home). In addition, teachers will update grades and attendance information in SchoolTool on a regular basis. To sign up for SchoolTool, or if you are unable to access the Internet, please contact the middle school main office.

Student Agenda Books...

...serve several important purposes at Draper Middle School!

Agenda books are an essential tool for helping students get organized and keep track of multiple homework assignments, music lessons, activities and other commitments or deadlines. These books are also an effective way for parents to learn about their child’s homework, communicate with teachers, etc. For example:

- Parents can tell, quickly, whether or not students are recording daily homework assignments in the student agenda book. All students are required to have the school agenda book, which is purchased at a cost of $5.
- Parents can see if their child has been assigned a “Period 10” appointment by a particular teacher – and why. This information is noted at the bottom of the assignment page. (See page 24 for more about the four school rules.)
- Parents and teachers can arrange to communicate via the “notes” section on students’ agenda books. For example, when homework is a problem, teachers can record whether or not all homework was satisfactorily completed for the week.
- “Pass pages” in the agenda books show how often students are leaving class to go the bathroom, the library, another classroom, etc.

All students are issued an agenda book at the start of each school year and they are required to have it with them every day.

Talk with your children about how to use it and why. Suggest they open it at the beginning of each class and leave it on their desk until they have written down their assignments. Encourage them to review it before leaving school to be sure they bring home the books and other materials they will need.
Organization & Homework

One of the biggest challenges students will face during their middle school years will come from an unexpected source. It isn’t making the basketball team or having to memorize a long list of mathematical formulas. According to counselors and teachers, it’s learning how to manage their time and stay organized.

For the first time, all students are faced with having multiple teachers, each with their own set of assignments and expectations. Juggling these new academic relationships (not to mention their extracurricular activities and social lives) can be overwhelming for some kids. Helping children learn to keep track of their commitments will save them a lot of frustration and will put them on the road to success in school – and life!

Homework Tips continued on page 22

3 COMMON PITFALLS

WATCH OUT FOR THESE TRAPS!

1. **NOT WRITING DOWN ASSIGNMENTS.**

Guidance counselors at Draper Middle School say this is a huge issue for students. Smart students get into the routine of copying down homework assignments from the chalkboard as soon as they enter the classroom. Unfortunately, many kids think they can trust their memories – and quickly get into trouble.

2. **NOT BRINGING THE RIGHT THINGS HOME.**

At the end of each day, students should refer to their student agenda books when packing books and other supplies for home. Again, memory is not always reliable! However, when kids do forget needed books or papers, parents are encouraged to come back at night – with their children – to get what they need from the locker. After a couple of nights doing this, kids almost always get better at packing the right supplies before leaving school.

3. **NOT DOING ASSIGNMENTS THE FIRST NIGHT.**

Draper’s block schedule means students actually have two nights to complete homework in most subjects. But guidance counselors and teachers emphasize it’s important to get into the habit of doing homework the FIRST night. Parents can help by insisting upon this and asking to see completed work. This system automatically breaks homework into manageable chunks: three core subjects one night, two the next and so on. Also, if students attempt to do an assignment the first night and discover they need help or have questions, they still have an extra day to see the teacher – either in advisory or after school – before it’s due.
Bullying... back off... step up!

Bullying has become a problem virtually everywhere. News reports tell of children who have been bullied in the school yard and on the Internet. National magazines and talk show guests focus on topics like cliques and how truly mean girls can be to each other. And no doubt your own children have seen, heard about or experienced bullying.

School officials understand the impact this problem can have on a school environment. More than a physical threat, bullying creates a climate of fear and makes learning difficult for all students.

**Bystanders: The third party to bullying**

Traditionally, bullying prevention programs focused on the two most obvious parties to the crime, the bully and the victim. However, new approaches now highlight the important role the witness or bystander can play in stopping bullies in their tracks.

In their book *Bullies and Victims: Helping Your Child Through the Schoolyard Battlefield*, authors Suellen Fried and Paula Fried write: “Though there is conflicting data about the percentage of children who are identified as victims, the majority of students...are neither bullies nor victims, they are witnesses to the bullying.” Harnessing the strength of these numbers may be the best hope for turning the bullying trend around.

Consider the following:

- **Bystanders are harmed by bullying.** If students feel powerless to put an end to bullying, they may experience fear, sadness, anger, guilt or shame. All these can make learning difficult.

- **Bystanders often become part of the problem.** With preadolescents, peer pressure and a desire to fit in will color most of the decisions they make. When confronted with the ominous question, “Whose side are you on?” many will side with the bully, which makes the problem worse.

- **There is no such thing as an innocent bystander.** Simply knowing that bullying is taking place and yet not taking action makes the witness as much a part of the problem as the bully. However, standing up for others can take a lot of courage.

**Helping your children take a stand**

Encouraging your children to help prevent bullying may seem like a good idea in theory, but there are a lot of factors — fear of retaliation being foremost — that can discourage them from taking a stand. Here are some ways you can help:

- **Talk with your children about bullying.** Ask them about what they witness at school. Keep the lines of communication open so that you will likely be the one they confide in.

- **Let kids know it is okay to report bullying.** Make it safe for your children to tell you about the things they have seen and what bothers them. Although your first instinct might be to tell your children how to respond or, even worse, to downplay bullying as a natural rite of passage, try to listen and keep your responses neutral.

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**Bullies Beware at Draper Middle School!**

Students attending Draper Middle School will hear a lot about bullying and what they can do to stop it. That’s because the school uses the nationally-recognized Bully Beware training with all students in grades six through eight.

Draper tackles the issue head-on by discussing it annually in special assemblies and taking decisive steps to stop bullying when it occurs.

“One of the most important messages we want to get out is that students should REPORT IT TO AN ADULT if they are the victim of bullying or a witness to it,” says principal Debra Male.

By reporting it to an adult at school, the bullying can be stopped in a way that no one will know who reported it.

“That’s key,” Male says. “A lot of kids worry that ‘telling’ will only make things worse. Parents and educators need to keep sending the same clear message — that REPORTING WILL MAKE THINGS BETTER.”

Draper now has several ways for students to anonymously report incidents of bullying. These include an online reporting system and a “No Bullying Allowed” box in the library.

– Continued on Page 28
The ugly faces of bullying

• Help your child empathize with the victim. It is much easier for kids to turn a blind eye if the person being wronged is not a friend or is an unpopular student. Talk with your children about how they would feel if they or one of their close friends were in the victim’s shoes.

• Work with your child to develop strategies to help those who are being bullied. For example, if gossip is being spread about someone they know, you can counsel your children to counter it with the truth. The book Cliques: 8 Ways to Help Your Child Survive the Social Jungle by Charlene C. Giannetti and Margaret Sagarese includes suggestions for discouraging different types of bullying.

• Enlist the help of others. Bystanders far outnumber the bullies. With children who are hesitant to help stop bullying, the aid of a sympathetic friend or two might make the difference.

Bullying is not just about physical intimidation. In fact, it often takes other forms which are just as damaging:

• VERBAL: using words to hurt or humiliate.
• RELATIONAL: spreading rumors, excluding a person from the peer group.
• PREJUDICIAL: making racial slurs, making fun of cultural, religious or other differences.
• SEXUAL HARASSMENT: using suggestive words or inappropriate touch.
• PHYSICAL: hitting, kicking, stealing or damaging the victim’s property.

Bullying usually occurs between individuals who are not friends. The bully may be bigger, tougher, or have the power to exclude others from their social group. Lots of kids joke around with each other. This may include name-calling or rough housing, but these incidents are not necessarily bullying. Bullying has three characteristics that sets it apart:
1. There is a power difference between the bully and the victim.
2. The bully intends to hurt, embarrass or humiliate the other person.
3. The behavior is repeated with others or with the same person over time.

Books and websites for more information on bullying

FOR PARENTS:
• Cliques: 8 Steps to Help Your Child Survive the Social Jungle by Charlene C. Giannetti and Margaret Sagarese
• The Safe Child Book: A Commonsense Approach to Protecting Children and Teaching Children to Protect Themselves by Sherrylra Kraizer
• What to Do...When Kids Are Mean to Your Child by Elin McCoy
• Odd Girl Out: The Culture of Hidden Aggression in Girls by Rachel Simmons
• Queen Bees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and Other Realities of Adolescence by Rosalind Wiseman
• Dignity for All Students Act www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/

FOR KIDS:
• Why is Everybody Always Picking on Me? A Guide to Handling Bullies by Terrence Webster-Doyle
• Stick Up for Yourself! Every Kid’s Guide to Personal Power and Positive Self-Esteem by Gershen Kaufman, Ph.D. and Lev Raphael, Ph.D.
• Bullies Are a Pain in the Brain by Trevor Romain
• Cliques, Phonies & Other Baloney by Trevor Romain
• www.kidshealth.org. This not-for-profit website, organized into sections for parents, kids and teens, offers a wealth of practical advice (in both English and Spanish) on a range of topics, including bullying.
MORE HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS
FROM DRAPER’S BUILDING PLANNING TEAM

Make expectations clear & consistent!
Parents are the key to making homework a positive experience for their child at home. But, where do parents begin?

Schedule a structured time period for homework (e.g., 6:30-7:30 p.m.) and keep this time consistent. Designate a quiet place without distractions or interruptions like phone calls.

Look at their assignment notebook every night.

Do not accept excuses. (e.g., “I have no homework.”) Your child will always have something he or she can work on during their scheduled homework time: written homework, free reading, studying for tests, reviewing notes, organizing notebooks, etc. Insist that if “they did it in school,” they still have to bring it home to show you.

Help your child get organized and stay organized. Take 10 minutes each night to clean out notebooks and loose papers, three-hole-punch papers and insert them where they belong in a binder.

Establish a place at home to store backpacks, packed before bed with completed homework and all necessary supplies for the next day. In the morning it will be easy to grab on the way out.

Discipline the negative, and reward the positive!

Common homework excuses... and some effective responses!

I don’t have any homework.
Let me look at your Agenda Book. Or...let’s go to www.mohonasen.org and see if your teacher posted it on his/her webpage.

I already did it!
Show me.

I left it in my locker.
Let’s go back to school and get it. The building is open until 9 p.m.

I handed it in already.
Have the teacher sign your agenda book to confirm it was handed in.

My book is lost or stolen.
Call a friend.

I don’t need (or want) you to help me.
Okay, but I will be checking your work every night.

I do my homework but I always lose it.
I’ll help you get your notebooks organized. We can work together each night to help you keep your binders clean.

I don’t understand the work.
Well, you have two days to complete the assignment, so see your teacher tomorrow during advisory or Block Five.

I forgot to write my assignments down.
Call a friend or see if its on your teacher’s webpage at www.mohonasen.org.
The Guidance Office

Draper employs three full-time guidance counselors – one for each of the three grade levels. As students progress from one grade to the next, their counselor moves with them, providing continuity and time to really get to know students and their parents.

Guidance counselors are often the first people students and parents contact with questions or concerns. They take a holistic approach to making sure each student has a positive experience at Draper Middle School and that they are well-prepared for the challenges of high school and beyond.

Some of the key things counselors typically help students with include:

- **HELPING EACH STUDENT KNOW HIM OR HERSELF.** This includes helping students explore interests, capitalize on strengths and develop plans to address weaknesses.

- **EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND GOAL SETTING.** Counselors meet with students and parents to help select courses and review standardized test results. Counselors will also act as a “go-between” with teachers, students and parents to facilitate solutions to academic and/or behavior problems.

- **PERSONAL COUNSELING AND/OR REFERRALS** for students experiencing any number of problems – academic, social, family, etc.

- **HELPING STUDENTS BALANCE** the demands of school, family and friends. Special attention is paid to teaching “life skills” such as organization, study skills, time management, responsibility, cooperation, teamwork and other habits and attitudes that will serve students well in any classroom, job or social situation.

- **ORGANIZING AND FACILITATING PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES** where the focus is on problem-solving – not playing the “blame game.” (See “Parent Conference,” Page 17)

- **COMMUNICATING** regularly with parents to build strong and effective partnerships between home and school.

**YOUR COUNSELOR IS HERE TO HELP!**

Students: Make an appointment whenever you have questions or concerns. Parents: Call our office at 356-8370.

**ANGIE SANTABARBARA**

Call 356-8370 or email asantabarbara@mohonasen.org

*(During the 2014-15 school year, Mrs. Santabarbara works with 6th graders. In September 2015 she will move to the 7th grade with her students.)*

**KYRA GRIMSLEY**

Call 356-8370 or email kgirmsley@mohonasen.org

*(During the 2014-15 school year, Mrs. Grimsley works with 7th graders. In September 2015 she will move to the 8th grade with her students.)*

**DEBBIE WOOD**

Call 356-8370 or email debwood@mohonasen.org

*(During the 2014-15 school year, Mrs. Wood works with the 8th graders. In September 2015 she will move to 6th grade with new students.)*
**STRATEGIES THAT REALLY WORK!**

1. **REPORT ALL BULLYING TO SCHOOL AUTHORITIES**
   - Even the best students will quickly fall behind when attendance drops or there is chronic tardiness. Parent support on this is essential.

2. **BE SAFE; BE SMART**
   - Know the things you can do to avoid being a target.

3. **BUILD STRONG FRIENDSHIPS**
   - Get involved in school clubs and activities to build your circle of friends.

4. **TAKE A STRONG STAND WITH YOUR PEERS**
   - Let your friends know you don’t approve of bullying and won’t be a silent witness to it.

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**ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES & TARDINESS**

As standards are raised, students really can’t afford to miss school. Even the best students will quickly fall behind when attendance drops or there is chronic tardiness. Parent support on this is essential.

**WRITTEN EXCUSES ARE REQUIRED WITHIN THREE DAYS**

Students in grades K-12 who are absent from school must submit a written excuse, signed by a parent/legal guardian, within three days of the student’s return to school or their attendance record will permanently reflect an unexcused absence after this time. (In other words, no backdating of excuses will be allowed after these three days.) The excuse should indicate the reason for and the date(s) of the absence.

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “EXCUSED” AND “UNEXCUSED” ABSENCES**

- **Excused**: absences due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, extreme weather conditions, medical appointments, religious observances, quarantine, required court appearances, music lessons and approved school-sponsored trips or activities.

- **Unexcused**: any absence that does not fit the above categories, e.g., family vacation, hunting, babysitting, hair cut, obtaining a learner’s permit, oversleeping, etc.

When a student needs to miss school, parents are still asked to notify the school that day by calling the main office at 356-8352. Upon their return, students should give their written excuses to their homeroom teacher at the start of the school day.

Students arriving late to school must sign in at the main office. If a student is late for a legitimate reason, parents are asked to provide a note within three days. Otherwise, unexcused lateness will result in detention.

School officials will take legal action when students are chronically late and/or absent. That said, guidance counselors at Draper Middle School are more than happy to work with parents of children with serious attendance problems. Don’t hesitate to call for ideas or assistance!

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**PERIOD 10 APPOINTMENTS AND DETENTIONS**

**PERIOD 10**

Period 10 runs Tuesday through Friday from 2:10 to 2:50 p.m. This is a time when many students voluntarily stay after to get extra help from teachers, organize their notebooks or make up past-due work.

Teachers may also assign a “Period 10” appointment to students who break one of the four standard classroom rules. In most cases, teachers will schedule this after-school appointment, in writing, in the student’s assignment notebook, indicating exactly which number rule was broken. (See the four basic rules to the right.) This helps students remember when their Period 10 appointment is scheduled and communicates to parents why it has been assigned.

**DETENTION**

Students who exhibit more serious or chronic

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behavior problems may be assigned a one- or two-hour main office after-school detention. This is also noted in a student’s assignment notebook.

On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays late buses are provided for Period 10 appointments and main office detentions, so transportation home will not be a problem for students on the assigned days.

**COMPUTER USE CODE**

Draper Middle School students have ready access to computers and other technology in their regular classrooms, the library and in multiple computer labs throughout the school.

Student use of these computers and other learning technologies is contingent upon them signing an Internet Code of Ethics Agreement each year and abiding by the rules spelled out therein. Parents are also asked to sign off on this agreement.

All students are strongly advised to abide by the rules spelled out in the Computer Use Code. It is very simple for network administrators to pinpoint misuse of computers – down to which computer, at what time and who was using it. So do yourself a favor and don’t horse around on the school computers.

**DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT**

In compliance with the state’s Safe Schools Against Violence (SAVE) legislation and the Dignity for All Students Act, the Mohonasen Board of Education has adopted a Code of Conduct (i.e., rules and regulations) for all people on school property.

This district-wide Code of Conduct was developed in consultation with teachers, parents, students, administrators and other school/community representatives and is updated annually. It is available online at www.mohonasen.org or in the Draper Middle School main office.

Mohonasen’s Code of Conduct sets high standards for student conduct and academic integrity. The Code of Conduct outlines clear consequences for students who break the rules. It specifically addresses consequences for infractions such as bullying, intimidation, harassment, swearing, plagiarism and cheating.

The Code of Conduct also outlines the student Dress Code and Electronics Policy, as well as what is expected of students involved in extracurricular activities.

The Code of Conduct will serve as a standard for consistency and fairness that protects students’ rights while promoting responsibility. We are committed to holding high academic standards of integrity.

Parents play an important role in the maintenance of good discipline in Mohonasen schools. Parents are encouraged to review the Code of Conduct and discuss it with their children on a regular basis.

Parents should encourage students to be “school ready” every day. This includes ensuring students arrive on time, dress appropriately, bring all needed materials and present an attitude of respect. It is essential that parents contact the school with any information that can help avoid problems during the school day.

Students are expected to follow four basic rules:

1. Students will arrive to class on time.
2. Students will bring all necessary materials to class.
3. Students will complete all assignments on time to the best of their ability.
4. Students will behave in a manner which is not disruptive.

**DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS**

New York State’s Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) took effect on July 1, 2012, and was amended in July 2013 to include a cyberbullying component. Just as with the district’s Code of Conduct, the law seeks to provide the State’s public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function.

The Dignity Act includes, but is not limited to, acts of discrimination and harassment based on a student’s race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

School officials understand the impact bullying and harassment can have on a school environment. More than a physical threat, bullying creates a climate of fear and makes learning difficult for all students. The law calls for each school to appoint a Dignity Act Coordinator who is trained to address issues in areas protected by the law and is accessible to the school community. The Dignity Act Coordinators at Mohonasen are the principals of each school.

**Cyberbullying amendment to DASA**

*The New York State Legislature passed an amendment to the Dignity for All Students Act, which took effect July 1, 2013 to specifically address cyberbullying not only within schools but also incidents that occur off school property that could “foreseeably disrupt” the school environment.*
Extracurricular Activities

JOIN A CLUB...GO OUT FOR THE TEAM... GET INVOLVED!

Extracurricular activities are a great way for kids to meet new friends, learn new things or give something back to their community. Best of all, studies show that students who are involved in after-school activities earn higher grades and are more successful – both academically and socially.

Details about meeting dates and times are generally provided over the morning announcements and via notices posted around the school. Parents and students should also feel free to contact their guidance counselor or club advisor for more information.

ASTRONOMY CLUB

Advisors: TBD

An “out of this world” opportunity for students (and their parents!) to observe and better understand the universe we live in by making use of Draper’s in-house observatory and telescope. This club will meet one to three evenings each month (weather permitting) and will feature a short lesson on a particular subject in astronomy, followed by hands-on use of the telescope. The club will focus on giving students the chance to learn and practice science as it is really practiced. Topics will include telescope basics, lunar observing, stellar evolution and the planets of our solar system. Students are required to be chaperoned by an adult at each meeting. Meeting dates and times will be announced in advance.

ATHLETICS

All students at the middle school (grades six through eight) are encouraged to take part in intramural athletics that are offered throughout the school year. They are designed to appeal to students of all abilities and diverse interests. There are also “friendship league” teams in swimming (USA Swimming Team Club), cross country and volleyball that are open to students in grades 6-8.

Students in grades 7 and 8 may also compete at the interscholastic level on modified teams in football, wrestling, baseball, soccer, basketball and swimming. Exceptional athletes in grades seven and eight may try out for a high school interscholastic team, but they need to pass a fairly rigorous test of ability in order to qualify to play at the high school level. Questions? Contact the Athletic Director at 356-8270.

CHEERLEADING (FRESHMEN)

Advisor: TBD

Eighth-grade students are eligible to TRY OUT for the cheerleading squad for the fall and/or winter seasons. Students who make the squad attend practices and cheer for the modified football team (fall) and the boys’ freshman basketball team (winter). Tryouts are in late August. Skills learned include jumping, building, tumbling and dancing.

COLOR GUARD

Advisor: Dan Jones

Mohonasen’s Color Guard is open to students in grades 8-12. The Guard accompanies the Marching Band at competitive field shows and parades. Guard members add a lot of pizzazz to the band by flashing and twirling batons, flags and rifles and dancing while the band performs. Members also compete against other color guards in New York State and beyond.

Students have the option of participating in the Indoor Guard during the winter months. It is also possible for instrumental students to participate in Color Guard.

Students are usually asked to attend meetings before the school year is over and are expected to attend practices beginning in July and participate in Band Camp, held the last two weeks of August.

THEATER WORKSHOP

Advisor: Nicole Gabriel

Get involved in a school play – center stage or behind the scenes. Mohon Masque’s big spring musical involves students in elementary grades through high school. Tryouts and rehearsals are announced at least a week in advance to give students time to prepare. Even if acting, singing and dancing aren’t for you, there are many other ways to get involved in the plays. Stage crew, set building, costumes, fund-raising and lighting are just a few of the behind-the-scenes opportunities for students.

DANCE CLUB

Advisor: Melissa Gregg

Come learn to dance!

HISTORY CLUB

Advisor: Dale Wade-Keszey

Take exciting field trips (like recent visits to Gettysburgh, PA and Baltimore, MD) while expanding your understanding of history. Students watch historical movies, continued on next page
students are also encouraged to prepare music and play for the New York State School Music Association Music Festival held each spring.

**PEERS FOR PEACE**
Advisors: Maria Pacheco & John Winters
Peers for Peace is offered at both the middle school and high school. The goal of this student group is to raise awareness about human rights and increase tolerance and respect for diversity within the school and community.

**ROCKET CLUB**
Advisors: Mark Lajeunesse & Jason Varga
Students build and launch rockets from a kit.

**SCHOOL YEARBOOK**
Advisor: Mary Manno
Students in grades six through eight are encouraged to contribute to the many aspects of creating a lasting record of their middle school years. Yearbook staffers structure layouts, take pictures, write captions, and document special events that take place throughout the school year. If you're responsible, good at managing your time, hard-working and dedicated to producing a yearbook that reflects middle school life – then this is the club for you!

**SCIENCE CLUB**
Advisor: Carolyn Lundy
Environmentalists will enjoy the many outdoor activities (hiking, field trips, etc.) as well as recycling efforts that club members are spearheading. There are also plans to participate in competitions that combine science and technology. Joining this club will allow students to explore different aspects of science while having lots of fun.

**SKI AND SNOWBOARD CLUB**
Advisors: Fred Saccocio & Rob Buehler
Take to the slopes at various mountains in the northeast from January to March. Lessons and rentals available. Round-trip transportation is included. Open to students in grades 6-12 on a first-come, first-served basis. There is a fee of approximately $225 to cover the cost of lift tickets and transportation.

**STUDENT COUNCIL**
Advisors: Erin Degnan & John Winters
Student Council membership provides an avenue for students to discuss ways to improve their school and have a voice in school operations. Two student representatives from each home-room (grades 6-8) are chosen annually; these students must maintain a grade average of at least 80. Each September the eighth-grade class elects a slate of officers. Student Council Officers are required to maintain a minimum grade average of 85. Meetings are held approximately twice a month.

continued on next page
The Student Council sponsors several dances each year and helps organize the eighth-grade farewell dance. Other activities include an annual flower sale, various service projects and fundraisers that help support student field trips at all grade levels. This is a great way for students to get leadership experience while having a positive impact on their school.

**TECHNOLOGY CLUB**
Advisor: John Winters
This club takes what students are learning in technology class to the next level. Projects include robotics demonstrations, hydroponic gardens and mouse-trap powered vehicles.

**THE WARRIOR WAY SCHOOL NEWSPAPER**
Advisor: Josh Whipple
Draper Middle School's student newspaper, The Warrior Way, is published three to four times each year. Students in grades six through eight are encouraged to get involved in one or more of the various aspects of producing a newspaper. These include reporting, editing, layout, artwork and photography.

**TEEN TOWN**
Coordinator: William Van Wie
The extremely popular “Teen Town” program gives Draper Middle School students a fun night out where they can socialize with friends in a well-supervised setting. Teen Towns are held on Friday evenings, approximately 12 times during the school year, from 7-9 p.m. at the middle school. Dates are published in the district calendar.

At Teen Town, students can dance to music provided by a disc jockey in the school cafeteria, play basketball in the gym, and have friendly foosball, pool and air hockey matches. Pizza, soda and other snacks are sold throughout the night.

There is a $3.00 admission fee for students to cover the cost of the disc jockey, dance contest and door prizes. All parents are welcome to attend, free of charge. Parents who would like to help chaperone Teen Towns can do so through the Parent-Teacher-Student Organization.

Please note that Teen Town and Student Council Dances are for Draper Middle School students only; no guest passes are allowed.

All Teen Towns are chaperoned by several school officials including either the principal or assistant principal, teacher(s) and the school resource officer.

Participation in Teen Town and other student dances is a privilege, not a right. Any student arriving after 7:15 p.m. must be walked to the door by a parent or guardian. Students who leave the building during Teen Town will not be allowed to re-enter. Any student evicted from Teen Town will not be allowed to participate in Teen Towns/dances for the remainder of the year. Students suspended from school since the last general student dance or Teen Town, or students on “Academic Probation” will not be permitted to attend the next event.

**Bullying (continued from page 20)**

The school also has student complaint forms, where students can write a report and turn a less serious incident into the front office.

School counselors at Draper will teach kids strategies to help avoid being the target of bullying — such as making eye contact, walking assertively through the halls and developing a circle of support by joining a school club or activity where they will make friends and develop valuable connections.

Students who are known to bully others are subject to disciplinary action. They may also be referred for specialized counseling designed to help them examine — and change — their bullying behaviors.

Keep in mind that bullying can take on many forms. Cyberbullying has become a big issue at Draper MS. This is where verbal bullying and threats take place via “IMing,” text messaging, e-mail or social media websites like Facebook. Draper has a program for 7th graders to address this issue.
“This & That”

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER

Any change of address or telephone number must be reported to the Guidance Office (356-8370) and the school nurse’s office (356-8360).

For obvious reasons, the school must have daytime phone numbers where parents can be reached in the event of an emergency.

CLOSINGS/EARLY DISMISSALS

The superintendent of schools may close schools or dismiss students and staff early when hazardous weather or other emergencies threaten health or safety.

School closings and delayed starting times will be reported to local television stations and radio stations.

Closing information is also posted on the Mohonasen School District website at www.mohonasen.org, on the district’s Facebook page and via the district’s weather telephone hotline at 356-8348.

Sign up to receive e-mail and/or text message alerts in the case of a closing/delay or early dismissal by signing up for School News Notifier at the District’s website.

FIELD TRIPS

Students must have prior written permission from a parent or legal guardian for all school-sponsored field trips. A permission/health form must be obtained from the teacher coordinating the trip, signed and returned to the school prior to the trip.

Additionally, in order to participate in field trips, students must have on file with the school nurse an Activity/Field Trip Medication Form along with a Student Health Card. (Both cards are sent home at the start of each school year.)

Keep in mind that participation in field trips is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked based on behavior, attendance or school performance.

Students are representatives of their school while on field trips and should behave accordingly by following all school rules. Students are also responsible for making up any course work they missed while on the trip.

LOCKERS & LOCKS

All students are assigned their own locker, as near to their advisory as possible. Students may go to their locker any time during the school day provided they are not late for class. If a student loses a lock, s/he may purchase a new one for $5.

TO UNLOCK YOUR LOCKER:

• Turn the knob right two or more complete turns, stopping at the first number of the combination.

• Then turn the knob left, one complete turn, past the first number of the combination and stopping at the second number of the combination.

• Finally, turn the knob right to the third number of the combination and stop. Pull the locker handle to open.

Students should NOT share their locker combinations or their locks with other students.

They should also avoid storing valuables in their lockers. Be sure your locker is closed and locked before you leave it. (Do not leave it in a ready-open position!) The school is not responsible for items reported missing from school lockers.

Make sure you’ve cleaned out your locker at the end of the school year by the deadline publicized on the morning announcements. After that time, all lockers will be emptied and your personal items will be relocated to a central lost and found box. (HINT: You’d be surprised at how many students don’t pay attention to the end of year deadline and then end up digging through mountains of abandoned “stuff” for a beloved coat... CD... pair of shoes... etc.)

Be advised that student lockers are the property of the district and, like textbooks, are loaned to students for their use during the school year. To ensure student health and safety, the school reserves the right to inspect locker contents. This inspection may include, but is not limited to, locker clean-out days, the use of trained drug dogs and individual locker inspections.
**LOST AND FOUND**

Any student who has lost something or believes it may have been stolen, should report this to the office. School officials will make a reasonable attempt to find lost or stolen property, but the district is not responsible for its replacement.

Students who find property belonging to someone else are asked to bring it to the main office.

**MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Each day during homeroom, morning announcements give students valuable information via DMS TV about things like athletic team tryouts, club activities, various deadlines and school news. Listen carefully and have a pencil ready to jot down notes!

Morning announcements are also available at www.mohonasen.org

**PASSES**

Student assignment notebooks also serve as their hall passes. When traveling the halls during instructional periods students need to get the “pass page” in their assignment book signed by a teacher or other school official. Students are required to have this notebook with them at all times and be ready to present their “pass” whenever asked by a staff member.

**PUBLIC CONCERNS**

Public concerns about any facet of school life should generally follow a chain of command, starting with the person closest to the source of the complaint.

In most instances concerns will be directed to the building principal or her assistant if the matter cannot first be resolved by the teacher, coach or other staff member involved.

If an issue is not satisfactorily resolved at the building level, the concern may be carried to the superintendent of schools or one of her assistants.

**RELEASE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

From time to time, student directory information is released for use in school publications, on school webpages and to the media, depicting activities of the Mohonasen School District.

Parents who object to the release of their child’s directory information must notify both the superintendent of schools and their building principal – in writing – on or before September 15 in any given school year.

For more details, see the “Release of Directory Information” notice on the district website at www.mohonasen.org.

**SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)**

Thanks to a partnership with the Rotterdam Police Department, a police officer works full-time in the Mohonasen School District when school is in session. (The district also has a Chief of Security.)

Mohonasen’s SRO provides a visible law enforcement presence on the campus. He is also a resource for students, parents, faculty and staff. The SRO is involved in counseling, teaching, participation in extracurricular activities as well as safety and security issues. His office is located at Mohonasen High School.

**SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

Draper Middle School has a Social Worker who is available to help students who are dealing with personal problems such as depression, drug or alcohol abuse, a family crisis, etc. Students may contact the Social Worker directly at 356-8375 (office in main office suite) or they may be referred to her by a parent or school personnel.

Parents are also welcome to call the school social worker for information and referrals to community and social service programs.

**SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS**

School supply lists for each grade level are generally mailed home with the fourth quarter report cards at the start of July. The information is also provided online at www.mohonasen.org.

**SECURITY CAMERAS AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Surveillance cameras to help deter violence and vandalism are in place in all Mohonasen schools.

These closed-circuit TV cameras monitor student activity in high-traffic areas both inside and outside of our schools. Security cameras record people as they enter and exit each building and sensors notify staff when there has been an unauthorized entry at selected doors. (There are NO surveillance cameras in student bathrooms or physical education locker rooms.)

The presence of cameras is designed to serve as an added deterrent to fights and other misbehavior; vandalism and violence. Video recordings also provide powerful evidence in disciplinary or criminal investigations.
**SIGNING STUDENTS IN AND OUT**

When picking middle-school students up early for doctor appointments, etc., parents are asked to observe the following procedures:

- Parents are asked to write an early dismissal note for their child to bring to the office the morning of the appointment. This note should state the student's full name, reason for having to leave early, the time he or she will be picked up and include a parent's signature. The office will then issue an early dismissal pass, which students simply need to show to their teacher at the time of dismissal. The student is then free to report to the main office to meet his or her parent.

- Parents need to come INSIDE the school to meet their child and physically sign him or her out for the appointment. For obvious safety reasons, students are not allowed to sign themselves out of school.

**STUDENT RECORDS**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents (not stepparents) and students over age 18 the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review your (or your child's) education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify you of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of your (or your child's) education records that you believe is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may do this by writing the principal, clearly indicating the part of the record they want changed, and specifying why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested, it will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided at this same time.

3. The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in your (or your child's) education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

**STUDENT TRANSFERS**

If a student is going to transfer to another school district, parents should notify the current school counselor as far in advance as possible. Early notice will help make the transition smoother for all concerned. School records need to be transferred and processed and schedules need to be adapted when students leave one school for another. Whenever possible, it’s best to time the move to coincide with the end of a marking period or the beginning of a new school year.

**SWIMMING POOL**

In addition to its use in Physical Education classes (one four-week unit each year in grades 5-9) students can take advantage of a growing number of pool programs and courses.

For example, Mohonasen now offers a competitive swim program for students in primary school through high school where the emphasis is on preparing students for competitive swim at the high school level.

Students can also take lifeguarding courses at Mohonasen. Once they receive their certification, students age 15 and older can be employed as lifeguards at the pool – a fun and lucrative part-time job.

Early birds can also participate in the morning lap swim or open swim sessions for just one dollar per session. A calendar of pool classes is posted on the district web site (swimming pool pages) and mailed home with the Continuing Education course guide.

Students on the boys’ and girls’ swim teams also use the pool for practice and meets.

Mohonasen’s Aquatics Department is always looking at new and more specialized classes, so listen to the morning announcements, check the bulletin board in the pool lobby or visit the website for the latest offerings and opportunities.

**TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Under new federal legislation, parents have the right to request the professional qualifications of their child’s teachers and paraprofessional staff at any time during the school year.

At this printing, ALL teachers in the Mohonasen School District are certified in the subjects they teach. All teachers also go through a rigorous screening process before they are hired.
With today’s students facing tougher graduation requirements than ever before, the district remains committed to providing highly qualified teachers for all students.

**TELEPHONE CALLS BY STUDENTS**

The main office has a telephone for student’s emergency use only (i.e., to call home for forgotten books, physical education clothes, etc.) Students are not to use this phone to make social plans or to call parents for a ride home when they don’t want to wait for the late bus. Cell phones are to be kept in lockers until the end of the school day. Please do not call or text message your child on his cell phone during the school day. The first time a student is found using a cell phone to call or text message during the day, the phone will be taken away until the end of the school day. The second time it happens, a parent/guardian will have to come and pick up the phone at the school.

**TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks and, in certain cases, other school supplies and materials, are provided to students on a loan basis. Such property is generally intended for use by a number of students over a period of years and should not be abused. All textbooks are to be covered.

Many of the new textbook companies now offer companion websites and Web-based tutorials to help students succeed. When in doubt, ask the teacher for the Web address and (in some cases) the required password for accessing these added resources.

Students are responsible for the return of all loaned property. Each book is checked by the teacher when issued and its number and condition are registered upon student receipt. With reasonable care, books can be returned in June in about the same condition as when issued. If a book is lost or damaged, the student will be required to pay a fee based on the cost and condition of the book when issued.

**VISITORS TO THE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

For security reasons, all visitors during school hours are required to first report to the middle school office for a visitor’s pass and present a photo ID. This includes parents.

**WEBSITE FOR MOHONASEN**

**WWW.MOHONASEN.ORG**

The Mohonasen School District website provides news and information on all kinds of topics—from what’s making news in the district to what’s for lunch each day, along with some new features.

Draper Middle School also has its own section on the district website and many teachers have classroom or department-level pages where visitors can learn about homework policies, see student work or find helpful instructional links.

Things you’ll find on the district website include:

- Access to SchoolTool for student academic, discipline and attendance information, as well as Essential Tasks, interim reports and report cards;
- School news and important reminders;
- Teacher and department-level webpages;
- Information about programs and academic-related news;
- A link to the district Facebook page;
- Budget and school advocacy information;
- Athletic news and sports pages;
- Information about adult education programs;
- A variety of district forms are available for your convenience;
- Information about swim classes for kids and adults;
- A searchable staff directory;
- School closing/delay information;
- School lunch and breakfast menus;
- Board of Education news, meeting agendas and minutes of prior meetings;
- Employment opportunities in the school district;
- An online calendar; and
- Archives of district newsletters and publications.

Information is updated regularly so check in frequently!

**Students: “Dress for Success”**

Guidelines for School Dress: We tell students to come to school dressed as if this were their “job.” Studies show that students perform better if dressed the part.

Students will be sent home with a pamphlet in September with more specific guidelines, keeping in mind that some attire may be more appropriate for a party, the beach, a picnic, dance rehearsal or ball practice – but not for school.

If school and home work together on student attire, your child will understand what is acceptable and appropriate.
WORKING PAPERS

Any students under the age of 18 who want to work must first get working papers from the Guidance Department. This requires a parent’s written permission to work, proof of age and a certificate of physical fitness.

“Blue cards” are issued for students under the age of 16. When students turn 16 they must reapply for “green card” working papers.

The following laws apply to underage workers:

- 11-, 12- and 13-year-olds can work as newspaper carriers and can also hand-harvest fruits and vegetables up to four hours per week.
- 14- and 15-year-olds can work for three hours on a school day and eight hours Saturday, Sunday and holidays – up to an 18-hour work week. During the summer, they can work from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- At age 16, teens can work four hours per day, Monday through Thursday, and eight hours per day Fridays, weekends or holidays. They can work up to 28 hours per week, between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. With parental permission, they can work until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.
- No minor can work in the construction industry and teens are not permitted to operate machinery that could prove dangerous.
- Teens must be paid the minimum wage. Teens and parents should be mindful that while working offers a number of clear benefits, studies show that working 15 hours or more each week during the school year often requires students to sacrifice sleep, homework and family time.

SIGN UP FOR SCHOOL NEWS NOTIFIER

Mohonasen’s “School News Notifier” is designed to keep parents and the community more in touch with what is happening at Mohonasen schools.

SNN is a free, opt-in e-mail notification system that parents and residents can sign up for to receive e-mail alerts from the district. With SNN, district officials send updates and reminders about district activities and information about school closings and delays.

Parents/community members can also sign up to receive text message alerts about closings/delays on their cell phone.

You can choose to receive any or all of the alerts, and you can unsubscribe at any time.

To sign up, visit the district’s website, www.mohonasen.org.

“LIKE” US ON FACEBOOK

Mohonasen is now sending news and information out through the social media website Facebook. Visit us at: www.facebook.com/Mohonasen and start receiving our news and updates today!
Special Areas

The Food Service Program

It’s a fact. Students who are well-nourished are shown to have increased problem-solving abilities, memory, verbal fluency and creativity.

With that in mind, Mohonasen offers a food service program at the middle school that is designed to fuel learning AND offer a variety of choices that appeal to adolescents.

How much does breakfast & lunch cost?

Middle school students are offered a full breakfast for $1.25. School lunches at the middle school cost $2.75 each.

Students can pay for meals as they go. Parents can also prepay as much (or as little) as is convenient into their child’s lunch account. Those who pay $55 up front will get 20 prepaid lunches – plus one free one. To prepay, parents can mail a check to the Mohonasen Food Service Program at 2072 Curry Road, Schenectady, NY 12303, send payment to school with their child, or pay online at www.PayPAMS.com.

How healthy are school meals?

Today’s school meals are lower in fat and provide well-balanced servings from each food group. School lunches provide half of the recommended dietary allowances for calories, protein and vitamins A and C, iron and calcium.

As a result of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, championed by the First Lady and signed into law by President Obama in 2010, new standards are making school meals healthier than ever.

According to the US Department of Agriculture, school meals must adhere to strict calorie limits, schools must serve a greater amount of fruits and vegetables, and there are limits to the amount of breads/grains served. In addition, under the law, all students MUST take a vegetable or a fruit with each meal.

For 2014-2015, changes are now being made to ALL foods and beverages sold to students during the school day. This includes food sold in vending machines, a la carte, school stores, snack carts and in-school fundraising.

Students who are well-nourished are better prepared to learn. By implementing consistent nutrition standards throughout all corners of the school building, we believe it will improve the overall health and well-being of our students.

For more information on the new meal standards, visit http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov or www.mohonason.org/food.

Charging policy

Middle school students may charge any combination of meals up to a value of $5. No snacks or a la carte items may be charged.

In the event that a student forgets his/her money again after they have reached their charge limit, the students will be sent to the school office to call their parent or guardian to inform them of the charges incurred. Students will then be given a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, fruit and milk, at no charge, until daily charges are paid.

Free and reduced-price meals

Students may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals if their families meet federal income guidelines. The application takes only minutes to fill out and can be done at any time during the year.

Eligible students are given pin numbers – just like everyone else – so their peers and food service workers are not aware which students are receiving free or discounted meals.

A copy of the application is mailed home each fall. The application can also be obtained online or by calling the food service office at 356-8225.

A new application must be completed for the current school year. All previous applications expire on Sept. 30.

Pay for lunches online using PayPAMS

Parents can pay for their child's meals from the comfort of their own home using PayPAMS – an online service that lets you pre-pay for meals online. With PayPAMS parents can also view and manage their child's meal account, schedule automatic payments and view a report of daily spending and cafeteria purchases for free. Get started by logging onto www.PayPAMS.com.
Health Services

A full-time registered nurse is on staff at Draper Middle School to serve student health needs, along with a part-time health office assistant.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Mohonasen provides supplemental student accident insurance that serves as secondary coverage. Benefits will not be paid for medical expenses covered by a student’s primary insurer. In order to receive benefits from Mohonasen’s student accident policy, parents must first submit all medical bills to their own health insurance carrier. In the event no health insurance exists, the district has elected to self-fund the $100 deductible for this coverage. Insurance forms are available from the school nurse.

HEALTH CARDS

At the start of each school year a Student Health Card is sent home for parents/guardians to fill out and return “ASAP” to the school.

The information on this card is kept on file in the nurse’s office throughout the year. It includes emergency contact numbers for parents and medical information concerning each student. Parents are urged to call the school nurse immediately if any of this information changes during the school year.

ILLNESS

Students who become ill or injured during the school day need to report to the school nurse before calling or texting a parent to come get them or leaving school on their own. Any student leaving school due to the above reasons must be released by the school nurse.

IMMUNIZATIONS

New York State law requires that all incoming 6th graders who have reached their 11th birthday by September 1, have a Tdap booster immunization before the beginning of school. The physician’s documentation of this shot must be presented to the school nurse. Any child who has their 11th birthday after September 1 will have two weeks following their birthday to get this NYS required booster.

Effective July 1, 2014, a second dose of Varicella (chickenpox) is now required for 6th graders.

For more information, contact the school nurse at 356-8360.

MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL

Students, with the exception of diabetics, may not have any medication (prescription or over the counter) on their possession during the school day (i.e., not in pockets, lunch boxes, backpacks, lockers, etc.). The only medication exceptions are an asthma inhaler or Epi-Pen, which may be carried by the student if they have a physician order and parent consent, along with the approval of the school nurse.

The following guidelines must be met before administering any medication during school hours:

- All medication, over the counter and prescription, must be brought to school by a parent or responsible adult in the original labeled container. Stock Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen are available in the nurse’s office and can be given by the school nurse with a physician order unless the parent chooses to provide the student’s own Acetaminophen/Ibuprofen. All other over the counter medication must be provided by the parent.

A written physician order including name, dose, duration, and reason for prescribing the medication and possible adverse reactions must be renewed by the parent/guardian giving the school nurse permission to administer the medication as prescribed by the physician.

Any discontinued or unused medication will be disposed of at the end of the school year if not picked up by the parent by July 1.

All medication orders must be renewed by the physician each school year.

SCHOOL PHYSICALS/DENTAL CERTIFICATES

NYS regulations require new students to the district as well as students entering 7th grade shall submit a health physical certificate signed by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner. This certificate shall be submitted within 30 days of entrance into the district or before January 1 of their 7th grade school year. Such examinations shall be accepted if it is administered not more than 12 months prior to commencement of the school year in which it is required. If the student does not submit a current physical from his/her own physician, a physical by the district physician will be scheduled to meet this requirement.

Dental certificates are also required for 7th grade students.

Forms can be obtained from the school nurse or www.mohonassen.org/forms.
**SPORTS PHYSICALS**

To play on a team, or even practice, students must — by law — have a sports physical on file with the school nurse. The physical must be dated within the past calendar year of the current sport season.

The physical can be performed by a student’s family doctor, but Mohonasen’s health physical form for Grades 6-12 — which is also available from the school nurse or online at www.mohonasen.org — must be filled out.

Prior to each sports season, students also have the option of having a free sports physical performed by the school physician. Students will be given advanced notice throughout the year of the physical dates.

Students must obtain and complete a Sports Packet (provided by coaches prior to each sports season).

Note: In order for all students to participate on a school sports team, a Sports Health Update Form must be filled out, signed by a parent and turned in to the school nurse. This form can also be obtained from the school nurse or at www.mohonasen.org.

**Parent Groups**

Participation in parent organizations is a natural way to stay connected to your middle schooler. It’s also a way to get involved in some of the many fun and worthwhile activities that these groups support. Get involved and you’ll also get to know your child’s friends — and their parents — a little better, too!

Draper Middle School sponsors two parent nights each year. Topics include things such as what to do about bullying or cyber-bullying; teen issues such as depression, eating disorders, ADHD, ADD, etc.

**MUSIC PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

The Mohonasen Music Parents Association is a parent group that supports ALL student musical performing groups, grades 3-12.

The group helps organize the Strawberry Festival in June where all groups perform. It also helps with the annual concerts and chaperones at special events – from local parades to out-of-state competitions.

The group meets monthly during the school year. Check the district calendar for dates and times.

**PARENT-STUDENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTSO)**

The PTSO serves students in grades 6-12 at Draper Middle School and Mohonasen High School. The group organizes a variety of fund-raising activities throughout the year to support student activities.

At the middle school level, the PTSO actively supports Teen Town (serving as chaperones and running the concession stand), sponsoring the 8th Grade Farewell Dance and assisting with awards ceremonies.

**MUSIC PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

President
Kristin Mrozinski, 847-8536
Vice-President
Tina Cole, 421-5801
Treasurer
Jeff Seeley, 355-6361
Recording Secretary
Bill Zarzycki, 852-4474
Band Info Line: 356-8290

**BAND BOOSTERS**

President
Lela Carpenter, 878-1672

**MOHONASEN-DRAPER PTSO**

Co-Presidents
Kelly Blanchard, 372-3742
mbanchard2@nycap.rr.com
Merideth Janke, 810-4048
merideth220@gmail.com

Co-Vice Presidents
Chris Bisner, 355-6239
bisnerb@aol.com
Holly Campana, 260-8075

Treasurer
Annette Hilder, 421-5934
ahilder@nycap.rr.com

Corresponding Secretary
Brenda Horne, 355-0665
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Students with Disabilities

Draper Middle School students with disabilities work side-by-side with their peers in inclusive classrooms and are actively involved in all aspects of middle school life. Students often receive additional services or participate in specialized programs to accommodate their disabilities while facilitating success in school and life.

What follows is a brief explanation of some of the district’s programs, plans and resources for students with disabilities. For more information, parents should contact Mohonasen’s Director for Special and Alternative Education at 356-8221.

Consultant Teachers

Since the goal is to provide a quality education in the least restrictive environment, most students with disabilities learn side-by-side with their peers in general education classrooms. Consultant teachers are special education teachers who work with the regular classroom teacher to help “integrated” students find success in the general education environment. Consultant teachers, for example, may co-teach lessons, restructure assignments, provide special accommodations and follow-up with students and/or teachers after class.

Resource Room

Special education teachers are available to meet with students in small groups outside the general education classrooms to make sure students receive the supplemental supports needed to meet high academic standards. The nature of these supports is spelled out in each student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP). The resource room is staffed by special education teachers who provide additional instruction to strengthen the skills of disabled students. Resource room teachers also work to provide students with necessary accommodations and modifications.

Special Classes

While all disabled students are encouraged to participate in general education classes, for some this environment proves to be very restrictive. Some students require the additional support and structure of special classes designed to address their unique instructional needs. These “self-contained” classes have low student-to-teacher ratios and allow for more individualized instruction.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

The Committee on Special Education must develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for all special education students. In developing the IEP, the committee considers evaluations, student strengths, concerns of the parent and where appropriate, student performance on state and district assessments.

An IEP documents the following: present level of performance; how the student’s disability impacts his/her participation in the general curriculum; classification of the disability; annual goals; recommended programs and services; eligibility for state or alternate assessments; a list of any alternative accommodations; a list of any assistive technology devices; and transitional goals at the appropriate time.

Non-Regents Diploma Options for Students with Disabilities

The State Education Department has ruled that the local diploma will still be available to students with disabilities. These students must still take the five required Regents exams. However, if they fail to pass one or more exams with a 65, students with disabilities who receive a 55 would then qualify for a local diploma. This “safety net” applies to any student who has been identified through the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or through documentation on a Section 504 by a Multi-disciplinary Team. It is also available to students with disabilities who have been “declassified” in grades 8-12, if recommended and documented by a CSE.

On June 30, 2013, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Diploma was sunsetted. As of July 1, 2014, students with disabilities may also qualify for two exiting credentials: the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential, or New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential.

Program/Testing Accommodations

Students with IEPs or 504 Plans often have testing or classroom accommodations as part of their middle school program. Accommodations may include: additional strategies for participating in class activities, for acquiring class notes or for completing homework. Testing accommodations are provided only as the result of a recommendation by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or 504 Compliance Committee.
**504 PLANS**

“504 Plans” are developed to support students whose physical or medical needs have a significant negative impact on their success in school. Special accommodations are written into 504 Plans to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education—just as non-disabled students do. Accommodations, for example, may include providing additional time and/or alternative locations for tests or special strategies for participating in class activities. A 504 Plan is not the same as an IEP (Individual Education Plan), which is generally much more intensive.

Psychological testing

At the request of the Pupil/Child Study Team and/or the parent/guardian, a student can receive psychoeducational testing, which may include tests of ability and/or achievement level. A psycho-educational evaluation must be authorized by Mohonasen’s Office of Student Services. Testing is conducted by the school psychologist. Students with an IEP are required to receive an updated evaluation at least every three years.

**TRANSITION PLANNING**

All students age 15 and older who have a disability receive transitional planning as part of the annual review of the special education program. The student’s case manager, in consultation with the transition specialist, will work annually to address post-secondary education, employment and community living goals. As students move closer to graduation, representatives from Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (formerly known as VESID) and other community-based services may be included in the process.

**WEB RESOURCES**

The Internet is a helpful source of information for parents and students who want to learn more about a particular disability, find resources, network with others, etc. What follows are a few sites that address some common disabilities:

- **ADULT CAREER & CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES-VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION** (formerly known as VESID)
- **ASPERGER SYNDROME EDUCATION NETWORK**
  [http://www.aspennj.org](http://www.aspennj.org)
- **CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER (CHADD)**
  [http://www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)
- **LEARNING DISABILITIES**
  [http://www.ldonline.com](http://www.ldonline.com)
- **NATIONAL ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER ASSOCIATION**
  [http://www.add.org](http://www.add.org)
- **NATIONAL INFORMATION CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH DISABILITIES**
  [http://www.parentcenterhub.org/resources](http://www.parentcenterhub.org/resources)
- **OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE FOUNDATION**
  [http://www.ocfoundation.org](http://www.ocfoundation.org)
- **NEW YORK STATE TALKING BOOK AND BRAILLE LIBRARY**
- **OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES**
  [http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/index.html)
Transportation

Mohonasen transports approximately 3,000 students more than a half million miles annually. Staff in our Transportation Department work hard to provide safe and efficient service to all students.

Post cards are mailed home notifying students of their ASSIGNED bus stop approximately two weeks before the start of each new school year. Students are asked to report only to this stop.

Please be patient the first few weeks of school to allow drivers to adjust bus routes and times. Pick-up and drop-off times may vary 5-10 minutes either way.

If parents have a transportation-related issue or concern, it’s important they contact the transportation office (356-8260) or their child’s school directly rather than approaching a school bus driver.

**BUS NOTES**

Parents wishing to have their student picked up or dropped off at a location other than their home must complete a request form that can be found on the district website, www.mohonasen.org/transportation. Please contact the transportation office at 356-8260 with any questions.

If a student wants to ride an alternate bus other than the one he or she is scheduled to ride, (i.e., to go to a friend’s house after school), parents are required to send a written note that must be turned in at the front office in the morning. Bus drivers will ask students to produce the approved note before allowing them to board a bus they are not scheduled to ride.

**BUS RULES**

The safety of all students is the district’s primary concern. All buses are school property and are subject to all rules set forth in the Code of Conduct. Each student has an individual responsibility to help ensure the safety of all students on the bus by following the rules.

Coming to school, going home and riding buses for extracurricular events or field trips, all students are expected to listen to and obey all instructions from transportation personnel and adhere to the following rules:

1. Behave in a safe and orderly manner at the bus stop, school bus port and on the bus.
2. Look both ways if crossing a road AND wait for the driver’s hand signal or directions before crossing.
3. Enter and exit the bus in an orderly fashion.
4. Ride in your seat, facing forward.
5. Keep the bus clean and free of litter.
6. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus at all times.
7. Be responsible for your own belongings.
8. Respect others’ property.
9. Speak quietly, using appropriate and respectful language.
10. Refrain from activities that may damage the bus.
11. Use of illegal substances (alcohol, tobacco and drugs) is prohibited.
12. Refrain from bringing objects (like skateboards, large musical instruments or school projects) onto the bus that may present a safety hazard.
13. No eating or drinking on the school bus. Many students have food allergies and food on the bus could cause a medical emergency.

The Code of Conduct spells out clear disciplinary rules for students who violate bus rules.

**CHANGING AN ASSIGNED BUS STOP**

If you want to request a change in an assigned bus stop, contact the Transportation Office by phone at 356-8260.

Mohonasen’s policy is to try to honor change requests to existing bus stops – provided there is enough room on the bus.

For obvious safety reasons, the district’s goal is to have no students forced to stand on buses. During the first two weeks of school, bus routes may need to be adjusted to meet this goal.

For more information about the Mohonasen Transportation Department, visit www.mohonasen.org.

**Activity Period Buses**

Late buses are provided on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, at 3 p.m., so transportation home will not be a problem for students participating in extracurricular activities or period 10 appointments and main office detentions on those days.