

Norton Middle School

Wildcat Roar

A newsletter for the parents and community of Norton Middle School.

• 215 Norton Road • Columbus, Ohio 43228 • (614) 801-3700 •

• A South-Western City School • nms.swcsd.us •



January 2025

24-Hour Attendance:

(614) 801-8879

Fax:

(614) 801-5528

¿Hablas español?

NAME: Geraldine Alonzo

EMAIL: geraldine.alonzo@swcsd.us

PHONE: (614) 801-3719

Af-soomaali ku hadal?

NAME: Farah Waes

EMAIL: farah.waes@swcsd.us

PHONE: (614) 801-7062

Important Dates

January 6: School Resumes

January 20: NO SCHOOL (MLK Jr. Day)

January 21: NO SCHOOL (Professional Day)

Important Information

Please visit our website: nms.swcsd.us

School pictures can be ordered at
shop.hrimaging.com

Basketball and Wrestling schedules are available on
our school website

A Note from the Principal

Dear Wildcat Families,

It has been a great start to 2025! We hope our Wildcats and Wildcat families had a wonderful and restful break. Without a doubt, we missed our 520 students at NMS. As we begin a new year, we want to continue to refresh our expectations here at NMS. We met with both 7th and 8th grade students last week to discuss expectations such as making it to class on time, focus on academics, cell phone expectations amongst a variety of other topics regarding the day to day here at Norton. We reminded students that half of their

middle school story has been written, but this next semester is entirely up to them on what this next chapter looks like. They are now one step closer to their next grade level and although expectations will rise, our support will always follow them.

It is hard to believe that scheduling for the 2025-2026 school year is just around the corner. We will continue to communicate updates on our school website and in this monthly newsletter. Our 8th grade students will be scheduling their 9th grade classes first on February 11th here at NMS. There will also be an information session at Westland High School on Thursday, February 6th, from 6-8PM. Students and families will get to meet building administrators, counselors and teachers during this event.

We realize the challenge of middle school students wanting to wear a coat, but please use the school as another excuse for another reminder. We are continuing to remind students to wear a coat during these colder days. If your child is in need of a winter coat or other winter items, please call the school's main office. We have opportunities to help.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out if there is anything that we can do to help support your student at NMS. We are always here to help.

Thank you for all you do for NMS. #WeAreNorton

Ryan Washington

Principal

Younger Children? Kindergarten Enrollment is Open

The South-Western City School District is now enrolling for the 2025-2026 school year for any student who will be five years old by September 30, 2025. To begin the enrollment process, visit www.swcsd.us and click the Enroll tab at the top of the webpage.

Student Council News: Students & Staff Give Back

In December, Student Council hosted their annual Canned Food Drive. 154 items were brought in and they were able to help out many families! Thank you so much to everyone that donated. The winning Homeroom was Mrs. Stuckey's class. They will be rewarded with a breakfast treat! Ms. Badger's class and Ms. McGregor's/Ms. Dean's class tied for second place.

Student Council will be hosting a Spirit Week and helping with the Winter Pep Rally later in the grading period.

Choir & Orchestra Perform for Elementaries

Shortly before Winter Break our Choir and 8th Grade Strings took a field trip to Prairie Norton and Darby Woods Elementary Schools to perform some holiday music for the young students. Several small groups were featured and the little had a lot of fun singing along and even got to play some drums! Mrs. Balik and Mr. Koehler did a wonderful job preparing the musicians and organizing the trip!



Classroom Spotlight: Ms. Roman's Science Classes

Enjoy some photos of Ms. Roman's class working with Snap Circuits during their electrical energy unit!



L-R: Miguel Favila Cardona, Ariel Cordova Chavez



L-R: Asia Omar, Meindine Alexis



L-R: Ahlana Gaines, Ty Addeo-Fox



L-R: Oliver Phillips, Hadley Scott, Fatou Camara



L-R: Dev Jones, Marko Lavreniuk



L-R: Mark Bawi, Bayron Luna

Mr. Roman (Ms. Roman's father, a retired electrical engineer) came in to help teach the 7th grade science students!



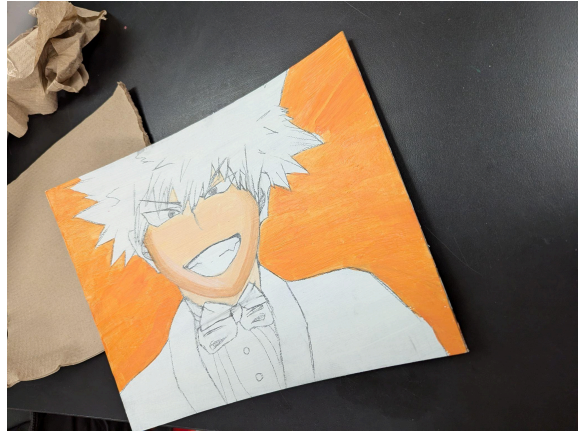
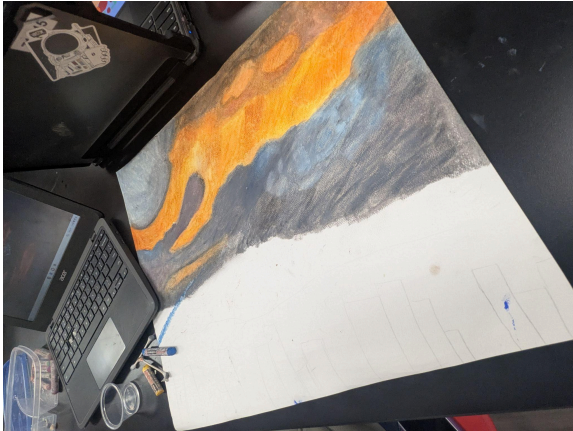
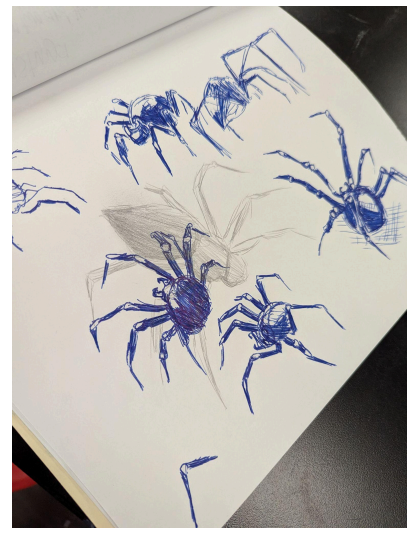
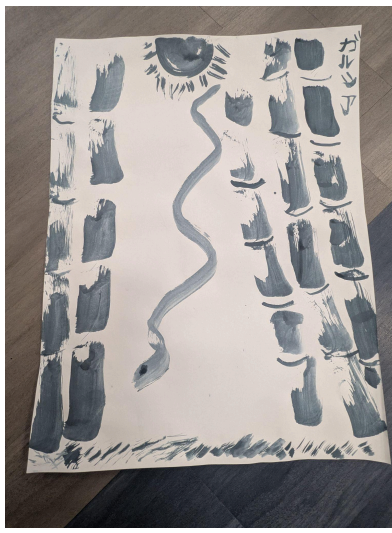
L-R: Ariel Cordova Chavez, Marko Lavreniuk, Mr. Roman

Writer's Club

Writer's Club meets on Thursdays after school from 4-5PM in Room 1305. It's not too late to join! Students can grab a permission slip from the office and bring it back signed to join. Please reach out to [Ms. Secrest](#) with any questions.

Art Classes: Masterpieces in the Making

Our 8th grade, Art 2 students have been working on an Independent Study project. Students selected what they are interested in working on, researched a related artist, and planned out their work. So far these projects are looking amazing and students have learned to think like an artist!



Study Tables

Norton Study Tables are after school every Wednesday from 4:10 to 5:10. This free after school tutoring provides students with one-on-one help and/or a quiet space to complete new or missing assignments. Permission slips for Norton Study Tables are located in the office, and need to be returned before students are allowed to attend. Students will need to be picked up no later than 5:15, or be able to walk home. If there are any questions, please email [Ms. Pencek](mailto:Ms.Pencek).

Second Step

Exploring Our Uniqueness

This month, we're diving deep into the exciting world of individuality! Our Second Step lessons have been focusing on activities that help students:

- **Discover their talents and interests:** Students are exploring their passions through art projects, creative writing, and talent shows.
- **Embrace their differences:** We're celebrating our unique backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives through sharing stories and cultural exchanges.
- **Build self-confidence:** Students are learning to value their strengths and embrace their individuality.

Family Corner: Celebrating Uniqueness at Home

Here are some fun ways to celebrate individuality with your child:

- **Family talent show:** Encourage your child to showcase their talents, whether it's singing, dancing, playing an instrument, or even juggling!
- **Create a family tree:** Explore your family history together and learn about your unique heritage.

2024 'We Are Norton' Poster Contest

Students were invited to participate in a poster contest to represent our 'We Are Norton' theme for the year. Prizes were awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. All submissions are displayed for all to enjoy!



#WeAreNorton

SEL: What It Is & Why It Matters

Social-emotional learning (SEL) helps students develop the skills they need to thrive in school and in life.

Through SEL, your students can build their competence and confidence to take on learning challenges, make good decisions, manage strong emotions, and get along with others.

Second Step, <https://learn.secondstep.org/>, accessed 5 January 2023.

I am honored to be a part of the team at Norton Middle School, and excited for the 2024-2025 school year. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at the school or email me at lcs0517@swcsd.us

From Our School Counselor



Hello Wildcat families!

I can't believe we are already in Term 2! As we move further into the school year, it's important to focus on creating routines that support our students' success. Establishing a solid routine can help students manage their time, reduce stress, and enhance their academic performance. Here are some practical tips to help you create an effective routine for your middle schooler:

1. Set a Consistent Schedule

Consistency is key! Help your child establish a daily routine that includes set times for waking up, attending school, doing homework, and going to bed. A predictable schedule can make students feel more secure and organized.

2. Keeping track of assignments

Students can access their "To Do List" on Google Classroom or link their Google Classrooms to Google Calendar to help keep track of assignments and due dates. This practice helps them develop organizational skills and gives them a sense of control over their tasks.

3. Prioritize Homework and Study Time

Set aside specific times each day for homework. Encourage your child to start with the most challenging subjects when their energy and focus are at their peak.

4. Break Tasks into Manageable Chunks

Help your child break larger assignments into smaller, manageable tasks. The timer on your phone is a huge asset, set it and take a break when time is up. This approach can reduce feelings of overwhelm and make it easier to stay on track.

5. Incorporate Breaks

Schedule short breaks during study sessions. A quick walk, a snack, or a few minutes of relaxation can recharge their mind and improve concentration. Again, using the timer on your phone, you can set how long of a break they will take and then refocus when their break is over.

6. Limit Distractions

Encourage your child to minimize distractions during work time. This may involve putting away their phone or using apps that limit social media access while they work.

7. Foster Healthy Sleep Habits

Ensure your child gets enough sleep by setting a regular bedtime. A well-rested student is more focused and ready to tackle the day's challenges.

8. Involve Your Child in the Process

Involve your child in setting up their routine! Discuss what works best for them and be open to adjustments. This involvement can boost their motivation and commitment to following the routine.

9. Stay Positive and Supportive

Celebrate your child's achievements, no matter how small. A positive reinforcement can encourage them to stick to their routines and build confidence.

We want all our students to have success here at NMS! Thank you for your continued support in fostering a positive learning environment for our students. Together, we can help them thrive both academically and personally! If you have any questions about routines please don't hesitate to reach out!

Kinds regards,

Carla Langford

Norton Student Services
HOME OF THE WILDCATS!

OUR MISSION:
AT NORTON MIDDLE SCHOOL OUR CARE TEAM AIMS TO GROW RESILIENT, CARING AND CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVERS TO HELP LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND.

HOW TO CONTACT US:
PLEASE CALL THE MAIN SCHOOL LINE TO GET IN CONTACT WITH ANY MEMBER OF THE CARE TEAM.
(614) 801-3700

LET US INTRODUCE OURSELVES!

- ★ **SCHOOL COUNSELOR:** MS. LANGFORD
- ★ **SOCIAL WORKER:** MS. J. JOHNSON
- ★ **STUDENT SUPPORT LIAISON:** MR. BROWN
- ★ **SECOND STEP COORDINATOR:** MRS. L. JOHNSON
- ★ **COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOL COORDINATOR:** MS. GREEN

OUR SERVICES:

- ◆ 1 ON 1 MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS
- ◆ SMALL GROUPS
- ◆ WHOLE SCHOOL INITIATIVES
- ◆ ACADEMIC, EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
- ◆ CONNECT FAMILIES TO RESOURCES AND/OR OUTSIDE COUNSELING SERVICES

PERMISSION SLIPS NEEDED!
A STUDENT MUST HAVE A PERMISSION ON FILE TO REGULARLY MEET WITH A CARE TEAM MEMBER OR PARTICIPATE IN GROUPS.

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS HELPLINES:
TEXT: 741741 4HOPE
CALL 988 SUICIDE PREVENTION NETWORK

DISTRICT COUNSELING PARTNERS

- ♥ DIRECTIONS FOR YOUTH
- ♥ THE BUCKEYE RANCH

A REFERRAL IS NEEDED TO ACCESS THESE SERVICES. PLEASE CONTACT A MEMBER OF THE CARE TEAM IF YOU ARE INTERESTED.

General School Reminders

Guests in the building

- As a reminder, all visitors to the school during the school day need to report to the main office and sign in using a driver's license or state issued ID. We appreciate your support and cooperation with our commitment to student and staff safety.
- With it getting darker in the mornings, please make sure to be extra aware of students who are walkers or bike riders at Norton. We are also encouraging students to be aware when walking through the parking lot and across Norton Road. Thank you for supporting our commitment to keeping students safe.

School Pick-up

- For continued safety during afternoon pick-up, please stay in your lane when picking up your child.
- Do not pass any cars in front of you or speed in the parking lot as we have students walking and crossing.
- Please pick your student(s) up along the curb lane and please do not make U-turns in the parking lot.

Cold Weather Reminders

- If students bring blankets to school, they need to be stored in their locker or in their bookbags. In general, extra layers are encouraged instead of the blankets. This can become a safety concern as students are walking around desks and stairs and could potentially trip on the blanket. Students will not be permitted to carry blankets with them during the school day. Parents, we appreciate your support in reinforcing this with your students at home.

Electronics Policy

As students, staff, and parents likely already know, on May 15, 2024, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 250 into law, requiring every school district in Ohio to establish an official policy governing cell phone usage during school hours and aims to minimize student use of cell phones in K-12 schools. This past June, SWCSD passed its revised policy to be compliant with this new state law and, as a result, the use of cell phones will be prohibited during instructional times in all schools.

The inherent goal with this revised electronic device policy is to increase student attentiveness and time on task in the classroom while also reducing the amount of distractions that inhibit learning. Heading into the 2024-2025 school year, students will be expected to have devices on silent mode and out of sight to keep their attentiveness on learning. Families can help our schools in reinforcing these healthy boundaries, by discussing the new expectations with their student(s) at home. Working collaboratively with families to reinforce these expectations, we look forward to helping students understand the importance of a distraction-free classroom to start the year as a part of our #BePresent campaign to make oneself fully present in daily learning.

For more information on supporting materials for parents visit: Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Supports for Families Resources ([link](#))

- “Electronic devices” - this includes cell phones, headphones/earbuds/airpods, hand-held games, and/or other devices which allow students to message others or access the internet for non-classroom purposes.
- Students are permitted to have their cell phones at school, however they are not to be used during class time. Students are able to use their cell phones during lunch periods, during passing periods, and before and after school.
- Devices should remain put away until class is over.
- Cell phones are never permitted in any restroom.

While we recognize that cell phone usage continues to be a safety mechanism for parents and students, we remind families (and are reminding students in the school) that cell phone usage should be minimal at school and be stored during instructional time. Beyond cell phones, we must be mindful of how best to lead a balanced and healthy digital lifestyle for success in school and at home. WOSU Public Media's Digi-Fit campaign asks students to be mindful of their digital 1) Well-being 2) Citizenship 3) Etiquette 4) and Safety.

As an extension of our Digi-Fit campaign in the South-Western City School District, we encourage students, staff, and families to examine their digital footprint through the lens of T.H.I.N.K.

Is it True?

Is it Helpful?

Is it Inspiring?

Is it Necessary?

Is it Kind?

For more information, resources, and guiding materials to talk with your student about their Digi-Fitness, visit www.swcsd.us/digitalfitness.aspx.

From the Clinic: Winter Health Tips From Your School Nurse

* Stay Hydrated

Even in colder weather, it's crucial to stay hydrated. Drink water regularly, as the cold temperatures, dry air, and indoor heating can contribute to dehydration. Don't like water? Sipping on warm drinks like herbal teas and enjoying nourishing soups can also be comforting and contribute to overall well-being. Try foods with high water content like cucumbers and oranges. Dry skin can be a sign of dehydration.

* Remember to nourish your skin to prevent dryness and itching

Wash hands with moisturizing soap and warm water as hot water can strip away natural oils. Use moisturizers to keep your skin hydrated. Helping your child to apply lotions after bathing will improve skin condition.

* Winter Nosebleeds

If your child suffers from winter nosebleeds it may be from the dry air. Try using a cold air humidifier at night. Saline nose drops or petroleum jelly may help too. If severe, consult your pediatrician.

* Physical Activity Indoors

Physical activity is important, even when it's cold outside. Consider indoor exercises and activities to keep everyone moving during the winter months. Some ideas for home workouts are circuits with jumping jacks, squats, push-ups, lunges, crunches or even computer fitness games.

* Dress Appropriately

Proper clothing is key to staying warm and healthy during winter. Hats and gloves help prevent heat loss from the head and hands, which are particularly vulnerable to cold exposure. Dress in layers to stay comfortable both indoors and outdoors.

* Illness

As cold and flu season arrives, please remember that students must be fever, vomit, and diarrhea-free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school after an illness. This helps decrease the spread of germs to the general school population. Remind your child that good/frequent hand washing is our best defense against germs!

Rebecca McGovern, RN, BSN, LSN

Rebecca.McGovern@swcsd.us

614/801-3713

Keeping Your Child Home

See [district guidance](#).

Fan and Spectator Guidelines at Athletic & School Events

As always, we appreciate your support in the stands and want to see as many of our families and students as possible at our games. Here are a few reminders and expectations about attending a Norton Middle School athletic event:

- All contests start at 5:30pm, unless otherwise noted on the school website calendar - game locations may vary.
- Admissions for home events are \$3 for students and \$5 for adults - online and in person tickets are available.
- We expect all of our fans and guests to cheer positively and respectfully. Root for your team, not against the other team.
- Treat officials with respect. They will make bad calls, it happens in every game, even in professional leagues. If you have a complaint about the officials, see Mr. Wallace, Mr. Willis, or any of our school staff, instead of confronting officials.
- It is an OCC rule that fans are not allowed to make noise during volley serve or basketball free throws. We ask that our fans follow this rule at all games. The OCC also does not allow fans to display banners or signs.
- If students are attending a game, they will need to stay in the bleachers and watch the game, unless getting concessions (as available) or using the restroom. Parents/guardians will be called and students will be asked to leave the school premises or be picked up by a parent/guardian if they fail to follow this expectation.
- Keep in mind that there are families, including small children, watching the game as well. Please notice who is around you and make sure your conversations are appropriate and considerate of others. Spectators that exhibit repeated inappropriate behavior or language toward coaches, other spectators, or school officials will be asked to leave the premises.
- When the game is over, student's rides will need to pick them up within 15 minutes. If students walk or ride a bike home they are expected to leave once the game is over. Failure to do this could result in the loss of the privilege to attend games or other after-school events.

Our teams are excited for the seasons and we hope to see you in the stands showing Norton spirit and pride! Go Wildcats!

Infinite Campus Parent Portal

One of the important features of Infinite Campus is the [Infinite Campus Parent Portal](#). The Portal is available to every parent/guardian of a student enrolled within the South-Western City School District. Through the Portal, parents are able to access their students' information, such as class schedules, coursework, attendance, and academic reports via the Internet. Parents can also submit updates to emergency and family contact information via the Portal, as well as determine how and where they wish to receive emergency communications, attendance calls, general announcement messages, and email messages from teachers, school, and the district, as well as update emergency contact information.

To initially set up your parent account(s), please use the step-by-step guide found [here](#).

If you set-up your parent accounts during a previous school year, you will not need to change any of the information this school year to access your child's information. However, you will need to complete the Annual Information Update every year to review the "Contact Preferences" area of your account to specify how and where you wish to receive home-school communications (including school closing notices) and [update the emergency contact information](#).

If you no longer have your Activation Key, please contact your child's school for parent and/or student Activation Key information. You will need to provide the appropriate identification before the school will release this confidential information to you. Again, please keep this information in a safe place and do not share it with anyone else.

Go Guardian

The South-Western City School District (SWCSD) has adopted online services provided by *GoGuardian* to assist in keeping your child safe and more scholarly when they are learning online. More than 10,000 schools use *GoGuardian* to protect 5.5 million students around the world.

How is the South-Western City School District using *GoGuardian*?

The district has used *GoGuardian Admin* and *GoGuardian Teacher* services to:

- Help protect students against harmful and inappropriate online material
- Help students stay scholarly and more focused when learning online
- Help assess students' progress toward class assignments
- Facilitate communication between teachers and students during class time

For more information on Go Guardian, click the link here:

[Go Guardian Parent Letter](#)

Title I

Norton Middle School is a Title I School. Title I is a federal program that provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high percentages of children from low-income families. The program's purpose is to ensure that all children receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps.

Your Right to View Teacher Qualifications

Under the No Child Left Behind Education Reform Act, parents have the right to request information regarding the qualifications of their student's classroom teacher including:

1. If the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level taught and subject matter being taught *ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(A)(i)(I)*;
2. If the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status *ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(a)(i)(II)*;
3. The teacher's baccalaureate degree major, certification, and field of discipline *ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(A)(i)(III)*;
4. Whether the student is provided services by a paraprofessional and if so, their qualifications. *ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(A)*.

The requested information must be given in a timely manner. *ESSA Section 1112(e)(1)(A)*.

Lunch & Food

Students are not permitted to receive food delivery from any restaurant or delivery service (including but not limited to Doordash, UberEats, GrubHub, etc.) during their lunch period.

Parents are permitted to drop off food to the front office for their student during their child's lunch period only.

Free and Reduced Lunch Applications

Parents/guardians are still **STRONGLY** encouraged to complete the [Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application](#) as there are several district and external benefits that you may qualify for.

Parents can complete the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application online through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal under the "More" tab at <http://portal.swcsd.us>. Paper applications are also available in all school buildings and at the Food Services Department. Your child's application is only good for one school year and the first few days of the start of the next school year. Thus, applications must be completed **EVERY YEAR!**

POWER UP WITH BREAKFAST!



This institution is an equal opportunity provider

FUEL YOUR DAY WITH
A NUTRITIOUS BREAKFAST AT
NORTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

BREAKFAST TIME:

8:50 A.M. -
9:10 A.M.

PRICE:
\$1.00
REDUCED AT NO CHARGE

¡ILLÉNESE DE ENERGÍA CON EL DESAYUNO!



Esta institución provee la igualdad de oportunidades

ESTIMULE SU DÍA CON
UN DESAYUNO NUTRITIVO EN
NORTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

HORAS DE DESAYUNO:

8:50 A.M. -
9:10 A.M.

PRECIO:
\$1.00
REDUCIDO SIN COSTO