

Important Events for Fifth Graders

Specific Dates and Times will be Posted at a Later Date if Not Already Listed

Step-Up Day May

Fourth graders travel to the middle school one morning to meet the 5th grade teachers, as well as tour the building and ask questions.

Fifth Grade Meet and Greet August

You can come to the middle school to meet your teachers, find your locker, drop off your supplies, and walk through your schedule. This is a great way to calm the first day of middle school nerves!

Conferences October and March

Parents can attend a scheduled 15 minute conference with your child's homeroom teacher to find out how they are doing in the core classes. You may also meet with the specials teachers, ELP, or special education teachers on these nights.

****Important****

Please contact the fifth grade team the minute you have questions or concerns instead of waiting for a scheduled event. Early intervention makes life easier for you and your child.

Contact Information

Mt. Vernon Middle School Phone Number: 895-6254

Email: First Name Initial Last Name @ mvcsd.org

Principal: Bob Haugse

School Nurse: Megan Krapfl

School Counselor: Sarah Melsha

Reading and Language Arts: Jessica Thede

Math: Heather Plathe

Reading and Language Arts: Gina Becthold

Science: Brandy Schurbon

Social Studies: Lori Moss

Learning Strategists: Whitney Turner, Abby Ohlaug, Rachel Glaza, and Erin Musser

ELP: Susannah Maddock

Physical Education: Greg Murphy

Music: Kristin Anderson

Art: Samanth Yorgensen

Orchestra: Tabitha Rasmussen

Common Questions

How do I help my child with the transition to fifth grade?

Setting the emotional tone for your child is most important. If you remain positive about the transition, your child is likely to feel positive about moving to fifth grade as well.

Make sure your child is at school on step-up day. This way your child can meet the teachers, see the building, and have an opportunity to ask questions.

Once at the middle school, encourage your child to try any after school clubs. This is a good way to meet other students, get to know teachers better, and develop an interest or hobby. Information on clubs available for each school year can be found on the middle school website, weekly parent email, and daily announcements.

What can we do over the summer to help ensure a successful start to fifth grade?

Read! Read! Read! Have fun with reading! Join a summer reading program! Look for information to come home yet this spring. Set family goals for pages or books read. Avid readers tend to be stronger readers and stronger writers.

Make sure your child knows his or her math facts. This includes addition, subtraction, and multiplication. Something as simple as reciting them in the car, finding online practice games, or simple workbooks found at most bookstores can aid in learning or keeping up with the facts. Not knowing basic facts will put a child behind from day one in fifth grade.

Help your child continue to learn about responsibility. In middle school the students will have the responsibility to travel on their own from class to class, will be responsible for bringing the correct materials to each class, will be responsible to check in with their teachers if they are absent, and a variety of other responsibilities that come with the added freedom of a middle school student.

Will fifth graders have a homeroom?

There is a homeroom listed on each child's schedule, however, students don't go to a homeroom on a regular basis. This is used to help with handout and collection of items at school or organizing students into groups for special occasions.

Are there recesses?

Yes, there will be one afternoon recess. Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather. This is Iowa, and as we all know, it can be 80 today and 50 tomorrow. We go outside unless it is raining heavily or dangerously cold. The office makes that determination and is often in alignment with the elementary school. Academics are a priority and teachers reserve the right to keep students in if classwork is not finished or behavior expectations are not followed.

How do we keep fifth graders separated from the older 7th and 8th graders?

Core classes for fifth grade are held in a separate wing from the upper grades, however, we do share our hall with sixth graders. Fifth graders may come into brief contact with older students in the commons in the morning while waiting for the bell and while walking to the art and music specials classes. This has not caused a problem in all the years that fifth grade has been in the middle school. In general, older students are happy to be recognized by younger siblings and neighbors. They tend to be protective of our fifth graders.

How is the curriculum different from the elementary school?

The math curriculum is the same program used by the elementary school.

The entire K-5th grades use the *CKLA (Core Knowledge Language Arts)* reading curriculum, along with 95% to build 5th grade foundational skills.

Science uses the FOSS Next Generation Science Curriculum

How will fifth graders be introduced to EBR and PowerSchool?

It is part of our classroom instruction. Each teacher will explain fully how evaluations work in their classroom. We introduce EBR and PowerSchool to students and take plenty of time to give them practice becoming familiar with both. This is a process which takes time both for students and parents. We expect questions and are happy to help you understand EBR. Find additional information regarding EBR by going to the [Mount Vernon Community Schools Website](#) and click on the [Academic](#) pulldown menu at the top of the page. Then click on [Standards Based Learning](#). Once on this page, scroll down to the bottom and click [Mount Vernon Middle School & High School Standards Based Learning Information](#).

Will there be homework?

Expect 10-15 minutes of math homework when your child has not completed practice problems during class. Your child will have a minimum of 20 minutes of reading each night as well. There will also be occasional language arts or social studies homework if it is not finished in class.

The fifth grade team posts daily classroom topics and homework on Google Classroom. It is strongly recommended parents get into the habit of sitting down with their child to check it regularly.

Who do I contact if I am worried about how my child is getting along socially and emotionally in the middle school?

Certainly, you may always contact anyone on the fifth grade team with social concerns, but Kori Leighty, the school counselor, is wonderful at connecting with students and guiding families to find community resources when appropriate. Mrs. Leighty also leads a variety of student groups to help with the issues that commonly arise with middle schoolers.

What time can my child come to school each day? How long may they stay? Is there a procedure for dropping off and picking up like at the elementary school?

Students may enter the building at the front doors each day at 7:30 a.m. They remain in the commons area until 8:00 a.m. at which time students may go to their lockers, classes, library, etc. Breakfast begins serving at 7:50 a.m. Classes will begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. The school day ends at 3:15 p.m. Students should clear the school no later than 3:25 p.m. unless they are under the supervision of an adult.

Students that need a safe place to stay in the mornings or after school may continue to participate in Kid's Club at the elementary school.

There is no defined procedure for dropping off and picking up in the front drive. School policy does require parents to **call the office** to excuse a student that is arriving late or leaving early. Students should always check-in at the office in these cases.

Always call **the office** to relay messages to your child or about appointments and absences.

How is discipline handled at the middle school?

Please refer to the school's behavior chart.

MVMS SCHOOLWIDE BEHAVIOR PROGRAM	
ALL MOUNT VERNON MUSTANGS WILL	
Mount Vernon Middle School Staff and Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be Honest• Have the Courage to Do the Right Thing• Be Loyal: Stand by your family, friends, and country• Plan Ahead• Always Do Your Best• Be Self-Disciplined• Be Accountable for Your Words, Actions, and Attitudes• Play by the Rules• Be Open-Minded: Listen to Others• Take ownership and Responsibility• Be Kind• Express Gratitude• Help People in Need• Cooperate• Stay Informed: Vote• Obey Laws and Rules• Protect the Environment• Be Reliable: Do what you say you'll do• Build a Good Reputation• Think Before you Act: Consider the Consequences• Persevere: Keep on Trying• Use Self-Control• Do What You are Supposed to Do• Do Your Share to Make Your School and Community Better• Take Turns and Share• Treat others as you would treat yourself• Treat All People Fairly• Be Compassionate and Show You Care• Forgive Others• Set a Good Example for Others• Get Involved in Community Affairs• Be a Good Neighbor• Respect Authority• Volunteer
ALL STAFF WILL INTERVENE AND MAY RECORD	
Staff Will Handle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Throwing Things• Inappropriate Language• Put Downs• Pranks• Inappropriate Locker Room Behaviors• Passing Notes• Being Uncooperative• Cheating• Goofing Around• Teasing• Stealing• Budging in Line• Being Defiant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated Negative Behavior• Threats• Stealing• Damaging Property• Swearing at Others• Inappropriate Use of Technology• Rumors (True or False)• Violation of School Rules• Physical Aggression• Plagiarism• Inappropriate Touching• Obscene Gestures• Leaving without Permission• Exclusion• Name Calling (gay, retarded, etc.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theft• Weapons• Sexual Assault• Physical Assault• Smoking• Vandalism• Use of Drugs/Alcohol
All Behaviors May Be Leveled Differently Upon Investigation	

What is the daily schedule in 5th grade? (This is subject to change.)

1st Hour	Mustang Minutes
2nd Hour	Specials
3rd Hour	Core Class
4th Hour	Lunch
5th Hour	Specials
6th Hour	Core Class
7th Hour	Core Class
8th Hour	Recess
9th Hour	Core Class
10th Hour	Core Class

How do I read my child's schedule?

The middle school operates on a two-day rotation. The schedule below shows what you will receive before the start of your child's 5th grade year.

Exp	M	T	W	H	F	M	T	W	H	F	Course
1(1)		Phys Ed 5 Murphy, Greg - Rm: F200
2(1-2)											Mustang Minutes 5 Moss, Lori A. - Rm: A116
3(1-2)											Science 5 Schurbon, Brandy - Rm: A118
4(1-2)											Math 5 Plathe, Heather - Rm: A115
5(1-2)											Lunch Bruner, Lesly - Rm: 147
6(1)		Orchestra 5 Rasmussen, Tabitha - Rm: D170
7(1-2)											Language Arts 5 Moss, Lori A. - Rm: A116
8(1-2)											Reading 5 Becthold, Gina - Rm: A119
9(1-2)											Wellness 5 Haugse, Bob - Rm:
10(1-2)											Social Studies 5 Plathe, Heather - Rm: A115
HR(1-2)											Homeroom 5 Schurbon, Brandy - Rm:
1(2)	Health 5 Pedersen, Lance - Rm: E181
6(2)	Music 5 Anderson, Kristin - Rm: D176

*Any class period with a (1-2) will meet everyday.

*Any class with a (1) will only meet on day 1.

*Any class with a (2) will only meet on day 2.

It's helpful to rewrite your child's schedule into two separate schedules: "Day 1" and "Day 2".

Day 1

P.E.
Mustang Minutes
Science
Math
Lunch
Orchestra
Language Arts
Reading
Recess/Wellness
Social Studies/Homeroom

Day 2

Health
Mustang Minutes
Science
Math
Lunch
Music
Language Arts
Reading
Recess/Wellness
Social Studies/Homeroom

How are Chromebooks used in 5th grade?

Chromebooks will be issued to each 5th grade student after the computer use agreement is signed by both guardian and student and returned to school. Students will be responsible for bringing them to each class, bringing them to and from home each day, and keeping them charged. This allows students to use Google Classroom at home to keep track of homework or to complete any unfinished work from class. It also allows students to keep up to date with classwork in case of an absence for any reason. The middle school views these devices as a learning tool and the expectation is they are used as such.

How can my 5th grader stay organized?

Lockers

Shelves (wire or homemade) or Magazine Holders can be helpful, or some students use nothing at all



Interior Locker Dimensions: 34" Tall x 15" Wide x 10 1/2 " Deep

Individual folders (plastic folders last longer) for each class is a great organizational tool. If you feel your child needs more than this, a 3 ring binder is recommended over a "Trapper". Trappers become a catch all and a cluttered mess. However, any organizational tool is only beneficial if it is actually used.