

Incoming 6th Grade Frequently Asked Questions

When can I go to the library?

The library is open every morning before school at 7:45. Students are also allowed to go in limited numbers to the library during CARE. Each ELA class takes students to the library on a regular basis. Students are also allowed to come during class with a pass from their teacher.

Can you chew gum in school?

It depends on the teacher. Certain areas have a strict no gum policy, such as fine arts (band, orchestra, choir). Other teachers might be more lenient. You are welcome to chew it before school or during lunch, but make sure your gum is disposed of in a trashcan.

Can we use cell phones during the day or during lunch?

That's a great question! You are welcome to use your cell phone before school until 7:45 and after school. Cell phones are put away once you enter the building at 7:45 am. Students must silence their cell phones and must store them in your backpack. Students are not allowed to use their cell phones during the school day and/or during lunch.

Can we have snacks in the classroom?

If it is a healthy snack, most teachers are fine with you eating in class. However, it is up to the teacher. Some are very particular about no snacks because of the classroom, for instance, science labs and computer labs. Your teacher will let you know at the beginning of the year when you go over classroom expectations. If you do have a snack, it must be healthy and you are required to clean up after yourself.

Can we listen to music?

You are welcome to listen to music before school until 7:45 and after school. You are not allowed to listen to music during lunch. Headphones should be used at all times when you are listening to something that your teacher has assigned. You are not allowed to listen to music in the hallways and ear buds should be put away during the school day.

Do 6th graders have lockers?

No one on campus uses lockers. There are several reasons for this. 1) we do not have enough; 2) it takes more time to go to your locker, than to go to class; 3) there are not required textbooks to carry around; 4) food left in lockers attracts bugs; 5) lockers become a lost and found issue for assignments, homework, supplies, etc.; 6) lockers are a distraction (mirrors, decoration, etc; 7) lockers take up half the space in the hallways and make it difficult to pass by. You will have a locker for the gym and also for band and orchestra.

Can you have a boyfriend or girlfriend?

My first response would be why? From my experience in middle school, there is more harm than good that comes out of middle school students "dating." I would encourage you to work on your academics and find out what you are interested in and how to be a good friend before spending your time on trying to find a boyfriend or girlfriend. Please keep in mind that if you do have one, we have very strict rules about public displays of affection or PDA. There is absolutely no holding hands and absolutely no kissing in middle school without consequences

Do you have to carry your instrument?

Yes, you have to carry it into the building, but we have band and orchestra lockers that you can keep your instrument in so that you do not have to carry it all day. Students usually go by the band hall or orchestra room first thing in the morning before first period and again at the end of the day.

Do we have to wear tennis shoes every day?

No, but make sure you wear appropriate footwear. For gym class, you need tennis shoes. If you are working in labs in science, you need shoes where skin is not exposed. Also, house shoes and slippers are not allowed.

What is the dress code?

The dress code should be the same as what you have in elementary school. Please follow the RRISD Student dress code.

Do you ever get to go outside?

Some classes are located in the portables outside. Also, students will have the opportunity to spend the last 10-15 minutes of their lunch period outside for "recess". Outside time will allow students to play equipment (basketball, volleyball, football) and run around. Students may also have the opportunity to go outside during CARE.

Where do I put my skateboard if I bring one?

Students who bring skateboards to school will need to find a teacher that lets them "store" their board during the day or put it in the AP's office. Students are not permitted to carry their board during the school day.

Can 6th graders start new clubs?

YES! All you need is a faculty member to sponsor it.

What clubs are available for 6th graders and do they interfere with other activities?

Most of our clubs are available for any grade level. Clubs change year-to-year.

Examples of clubs from the past at RMS: Art Service Club, Anime Club, Board Games Club, Book Club, Books to Movie Club, Chess Club, Coloring Club, Comic Book Club, Code Like A Girl Club, Drama Club, Engineering Club, Makerspace Club, Math Pentathlon, Math Counts, Outdoor Adventure Club, Ping Pong Club, Programming Club, Robotics Club, Strategic Card Games Club (including Magic, Pokemon and Coup), Ukulele Club, Writing Club, Woodworking Club.

In addition we have 12 different UIL literary events that students can compete in.

Clubs should not interfere with other activities, but you will need to check with your band or orchestra teacher to see when sectionals are offered as these are typically before or after school.

Is there a limit to how many clubs you can be in?

No, but some might be on the same day, so you will have to negotiate your schedule.

Are there special events on game days?

No, we have game days so many days a week that there are no special pep rallies for game days.

Are there certain halls for certain grades?

Yes, the downstairs is predominantly 6th grade, except for a few teachers that teach multiple grade levels. Upstairs, one hallway is mainly 7th grade and the other is mainly 8th grade.

Will we do science experiments?

Yes! I hope that we will do a minimum of one science lab per unit.

Will we have author visits or other visitors?

Yes! You will have the opportunity to meet at least 1 major award winning author during your time at Ridgeview.

How do I complete all the homework and will we have homework on the weekends?

Homework can be a challenge. It is important for you to have a routine each day and to set aside time for homework so you don't get behind. Most teachers are really good about spreading out projects and giving class time to work on it. Don't waste class time! You will probably have homework on the weekends. I can't say for certain, but it is highly likely that you will have some homework in math and foreign languages over the weekend. If nothing else, we encourage students to read a minimum of 20 minutes per day.

Are there dances at middle school?

Yes, we have dances throughout the year. You DO NOT have to have a date to the dance, in fact, I encourage you not to have a date at all in middle school.

What is covered in Tech Apps?

Tech Apps is a basic multimedia course. We are offering it for 6th graders only. I would expect that you will learn basic typing and Office products like Excel and PowerPoint, but also more advanced software like Flash, Pivot, Photoshop, and others.

How does the Student Council work?

Student Council for 6th graders is represented by one student per advisory, 7th and 8th graders are able to run for office like President, Vice-President, etc. We also have a Principal's Advisory Council that students can apply to be a part of that meets with the principal bi-monthly.

How many floors are there? There are two floors at Ridgeview.

Do 6th graders take Field Trips?

Yes, you will have a 6th grade field trip. Sometimes we take educational trips to the Paramount Theater or the theater in Georgetown. We have also gone to author visits and to parks. One year we took a college visit to the University of Texas. Each year is a little different.

Do we have recess?

No, we don't have recess. We are able to go outside after lunch if we are following expectations and there is nice weather.

How do you find your way around the school on the first day?

Hopefully, you will be familiar with the school after visiting today, during Panther Camp, and Panther Welcome. Teachers will be in the hallways assisting students. We usually do not start tardies until the second week of school.

What happens if we get lost on our way to class?

There will be teachers, administrators, and hall monitors in the hallways to help any student that is lost. Please just ask for help.

Is there a map available?

Usually after two weeks, you will know where everything in the school is. I encourage you to come to Panther Camp and Panther Welcome. These are additional opportunities to walk around the school.

What do I do if it is a long way between classes?

You have four minutes between each class period. Some classes are spread out, especially if you have class in a portable and then a class upstairs. There is enough time to make it to all your classes. You might need to explain to your teacher where you are coming from. Do not take time to stop and talk to friends if you have a long way to go.

Why are 6th graders not allowed in Athletics?

This is a UIL rule. All 6th graders participate in PE and then have a choice to participate in Athletics, PE, or Dance as 7th graders. You may sign up for pre-athletics.

Are there tryouts for sports?

No, because 6th graders can't play sports for the school.

Do you change clothes privately in the locker room?

Not exactly. Locker rooms have benches in front of the lockers. Bathrooms have some stalls available, but are for restroom purposes more so than changing clothes.

Do we have to change in front of others in the locker rooms and what if we are being teased?

You will change in front of others unless you go into one of the limited stalls in the bathroom. If you are being teased, it is up to you to let a coach know. They cannot help if you do not report it. If it continues, you need to let the coach know again or go to an Assistant Principal or Counselor and fill out an incident report in the front office. We will take care of it, but you need to keep reporting so we can track it.

Will we get to choose who we share our lockers with and what are some ground rules?

You will potentially share a PE locker. Coaches usually let you choose your PE locker partner. They will go over all the rules. Obviously the most important rule is that you do not share your combination with anyone else. The other important rule is that you take your clothes home AT LEAST once a week to get them washed!

Does everyone have gym class at the same time and what do we do in the gym?

No, not everyone will have gym at the same time. This year it was spread out over four different periods. Usually in PE, students rotate between learning a sport and the workout of the day. At the end of the year, those more interested in basketball and football will work on those sports. Those interested in volleyball will work on volleyball and those interested in dance will have an opportunity to learn some dances.

Do you have to take a shower after gym class?

No, you do not have to take a shower, but depending on how much you sweat, you might want to take a shower. We do have showers available. You will just need to bring your own soap, shampoo and towel. Remember you only have a few minutes.

I heard that in PE you have to run a mile each day in under 10 minutes. Is this true? No, but it is a great goal. We would like for all our students to run the mile in under 10 minutes. Most weeks you will only be timed once a week in PE.

How does the cafeteria work?

Students will be assigned to tables at the beginning of the year very similar to elementary school. After the first three to six weeks, we will evaluate whether or not you are ready to sit anywhere you want. All 6th graders currently eat lunch during the same period. There are three lunch lines to choose from: tortilla, pizza, and grill. You will use your student ID as a lunch card similar to what you do in elementary school. The pizza line is from Pizza Hut.. The grill will feature things like hamburgers, chicken sandwiches, salads and chicken nuggets. The tortilla line has more homestyle features like enchiladas, nachos, and other entrees that vary day to day.

Is breakfast offered?

Yes! We serve breakfast every day starting at 7:40 in the morning.

Does everyone have lunch together?

Yes, by grade level. So, all 6th graders eat first, then 7th grade eats, then 8th grade eats. We do not anticipate this changing for next year, but perhaps the next year it might change depending on the classes you take.

What time does school start and end?

We open the doors at 7:30 in the morning for anyone that gets dropped off early. At 7:45, 6th grade students are moved to the upper commons. At 8:05, students are dismissed to 1st period. At 8:15 first

period begins. School ends at 3:35. After-school tutoring and clubs begin at 3:45.

Are there off periods?

No, you will have 7 classes plus lunch to make 8 periods. In high school you might have an off period. You will also have an advisory period each day, called CARE. This is similar to homeroom.

Can you switch electives in the middle of the year?

No, all elective courses are year long. Once you start a schedule, unless there is a serious concern and have already had a parent/teacher/administrator conference, there are no schedule changes.

Can we play outside before school or during lunch?

Students are able to play on the blacktop area before school. This usually starts around 7:30 and goes to 8:00, when we bring in all students to eat breakfast or get ready for class. We will also go outside after lunch.

How many periods are there and how long is each period?

Currently we have seven periods and one lunch period. Each period is 47 minutes and lunch is currently 47 minutes. This might change slightly next year, but I anticipate the time to remain between 45-50 minutes per class.

When will I receive my schedule?

Schedules are picked up for all students at Panther Welcome in August. This is when you will know exactly which class you will be in. We will send out verification sheets through HAC in May. This is only to confirm which electives you signed up for, not necessarily confirmation of which electives you will have next school year.

How are my teachers chosen?

It really is random based on how the computer selects schedules. Sometimes it has to do with your elective or special services you might receive. It will do no good to request a teacher. We feel that all of our teachers are excellent.

Do I get to pick the order of my classes?

Unfortunately no. The computer does much of the selection for you in regards to what classes you will take, who your teachers will be, and what period you will take each class.

What classes do we have to take?

You are required to take math, science, social studies and language arts. You are also required to have two years of PE and a fine arts class.

What if I do not like my schedule?

You are welcome to fill out a schedule change request form, but it is unlikely that your schedule will change, especially if it is just because you don't have class with a friend or do not like your team or elective selected. If you are having problems with students in the class, learning difficulties, or personality conflicts with the teacher, I encourage you to talk with your grade level assistant principal or grade level counselor. They will be able to help you sort through the issue. There are times that we change schedules when it is in the best interest of the student.

Are counselors available if you have issues you need help with?

Yes, we will always have a counselor available in the counseling office. In addition, your grade level counselor will be in the lunchroom each day if you need to let her know that you need to speak with her. Then she can call you from class at a later time to assist you. Assistant principals are also available to help and will be with you each day at lunch as well.

How do I make friends?

The best way to make friends is to get involved in the school. This might include joining clubs, talking and learning about others in class, and meeting those around you at lunch. My best advice is to just be yourself. Don't try to be someone that you are not. Don't try to impress others. Students like others that are authentic and true to themselves and also students that are kind and can be a good friend to others.

How do I deal with bullying?

I would love to say that you won't have that issue, but sometimes we do have to work with students on their behavior. One thing I can tell you for sure is that being mean to other students is not tolerated and will be dealt with. We ask that you let us know what is happening and fill out an incident report. We will go over all of this information and how to report incidents at the beginning of the year. The most important advice I can give you is to let someone know what is happening, whether it be a teacher, counselor, assistant principal, principal, parent or friend.