

# Getting to Know Center Middle School

## *A Guide to Our School Procedures*



### **The Mission of Strongsville City Schools.**

The mission of the Strongsville City Schools, an excellent school district with a tradition of nationally recognized students, teachers, and staff, is to ensure all students reach their fullest potential, through challenging curriculum and activities, provided by a highly qualified, motivated staff, in a safe, supportive environment, with up-to-date facilities and technology – in partnership with the community.

### **Guiding Beliefs of Center Middle School.**

*As a middle school, we believe...*

Interdisciplinary units and a cross-curricular approach to learning will encourage connections among all subject areas and address the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner.

Encouraging and establishing student ownership and responsibility for learning will instill lifelong skills for success.

Providing an educational environment that enacts high behavioral standards and recognizes students for their efforts and accomplishments will allow students to grow and flourish.

Education is a cooperative effort between teacher, parent and child; an effort that is built on strong support and communication.

*Jennifer L. Pelko*  
Principal

*Michael James*  
Assistant Principal

September 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians:

With a new school year and new students/families coming to Center, it is important that everyone is aware of the old and the new procedures that are followed at Center Middle School.

We hope that this guide will be a resource for you and your family and provide you with the necessary information to navigate the “ins-and-outs” and the “what do I do when” types of questions that you may encounter throughout the school year. Remember, this is a guide and does not cover all circumstances that may be unique to your personal situation; so please do not hesitate to call. Furthermore, all district policies and procedures not listed in this guide can be found in the student handbook included in your child’s planner.

If you would like any further information on any of the included information, please contact me by e-mail ([pelkoj@strongnet.org](mailto:pelkoj@strongnet.org)) or by phone at (440) 572-7090.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Pelko  
Principal

# A Guide to Center's Procedures

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## Academic and Behavior Concerns

Please report any academic and/or behavior questions or concerns as soon as possible to the classroom teachers, team leader, school counselors, or the administration. By being proactive in addressing any issues, we can help to ensure the happiness and success of all of our students. Listed below is the breakdown of staff mentioned above.

### Team Leaders

Ms. Pucillo – Comets

Mr. Steffen – Star

Ms. Britton-Magic

Mrs. Silvestri – Rulers

Mrs. Foky/Mrs. Schindler –  
Xtreme

### School Counselors

Mrs. Ray – CMS

Mr. Bambrick – CMS/AMS

### Administration

Mrs. Pelko – Principal

Mr. James – Asst. Principal

## Access to the Building After School Hours (Books, etc.)

Students that wish to return to school to pick-up a forgotten book, homework assignment, etc. may have access to their locker until 4:30 p.m. A separate procedure is followed for students participating in after school athletics and clubs and will be communicated to your child by their coach or advisor.

## Access to Classrooms during Instructional Periods

Parents and visitors are not permitted access to classrooms during instructional periods (8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.), unless given permission to do so from the principal, secretary, or classroom teacher. Visitors in the hallways attending meetings or assisting with various programs are asked to not visit classrooms. This policy is to ensure the safety of our students and also to limit disruptions to classroom activities and the learning environment.

## Addressing Concerns

### *The “Chain of Command”*

If a concern arises in regards to your child and/or an issue at school, please contact the person that is apt to best address your concern. For example, if you are unhappy with a decision that was made by a teacher, please contact the teacher first. If you are not satisfied with the response received, please contact the principal. This will help in keeping the lines of communication open and addressing an issue with the individual that has the greatest amount of information.

If your child is experiencing social-emotional problems (making friends, being bullied, displaying anger, etc.) or is in need of someone to talk with, please contact the school counselor for your child’s grade-level.

Please know that you may always contact the principal or assistant principal for assistance and to discuss questions and/or concerns at any time.

## **Cafeteria Procedures**

Students purchasing their lunch may bring in \$3.00 each day. They may also purchase milk for \$0.50 and a host of other extras for their marked price. If your child purchases lunches from the cafeteria on a consistent basis, you can still pay for lunch with a check made out to “Center Middle School” with your child’s first and last name in the memo. This check is to be handed to the cashier in the cafeteria. We do not have lunch tickets as were given in elementary school, but our cafeteria staff keeps track of how many lunches were purchased and keeps record of when they run out.

## **Center Lingo**

At Center, you may hear some new terms than you did at your elementary school. Here are a few common terms you will need to know.

- *Team Leader:* Your child is on a team and every team has a team leader. This person is good to contact if you have questions/concerns across subject areas or you would like to schedule a team meeting.
- *Team Time/Team Meeting:* Your child’s team of teachers meets every day during team time to discuss the students on their team, upcoming lessons and units and all of the exciting experiences they are planning for our students. This is also a time the teachers meet with parents as a team if necessary.
- *Core Classes:* These are the language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and health/PE (8<sup>th</sup> grade only) classes.
- *Encore (Xtreme) Classes:* These are your art, music, PE (7<sup>th</sup> grade), FCS, and technology.
- *Exploratory Wheel:* All 7<sup>th</sup> graders take a “wheel” of four classes, rotating through one course per quarter. These classes include academic lab (non-graded), technology applications, intro to family consumer science and skills for success.

A map has also been included for you assistance in identifying classrooms at Center. We utilize two buildings at Center, the main building and the Annex. The main building is home to all of our 7<sup>th</sup> grade teams, Magic and most Xtreme team classes. The Annex is home to our Rulers team. Some eighth grade students will be traveling between both buildings throughout the school day.

## **Communication between Home and School**

Communication from the principal and Center staff in regards to school happenings will be available twice a quarter. At interims, we publish “Center Pride”, a student-created newsletter as well as “Front and Center” which is published in August and at report card time. Newsletters are only available on Center’s website or though those parents signed-up for the principal’s e-mail group. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with our website. It contains a great deal of information from the morning announcements, to event calendars, team and building happenings, as well as resources for athletics, clubs and individual teacher websites.

In regards to homework, some teams utilize the Homework Hotline, while some post all of their homework under their team page on Center’s website. Teams/Teachers will be sharing at the beginning of the school year in regards to how they will be communicating homework and other news from the class with parents. This may include newsletters, the assignment notebook, or a host of other options. Please be on the lookout for this information from your child’s team/teacher.

## **Detention Policy**

Students may be issued 30-minute or one-hour detentions by teachers, staff, or the administration based on infractions to the student code of conduct as published in the student handbook. Detentions at Center are served in the morning or afternoon on Tuesday's or Thursday's, as well as Friday mornings. Parents will be contacted upon issuance of a detention to discuss the circumstances and reasons for the detention and to schedule a time for the detention to be served.

## **Dropping-off Materials to Your Child**

Each day at Center, we average roughly ten or more parents bringing items to school that their child forgot at home. It may be a homework paper, their lunch/lunch money, or "gear" needed for an after school event. It is understandable to help our children out once in awhile when they make a mistake, yet we are training our kids to be less and less responsible when we (as adults) continue to rescue them from their responsibility mistakes time and time again. We are systematically teaching them that there will be no natural consequences for their actions.

Based on this belief of developing responsible young adults, students will not be called out of class to receive forgotten materials. If a child has called home and requested a parent to bring them a forgotten item from home, it will be the student's responsibility to periodically check in the main office to see if it had been dropped off. If a parent has brought something for their child in which the child is unaware, it will be delivered during their lunch period. If the item is dropped off by the parent after lunch, it will be at the discretion of the office staff as to whether or not the child will be called from class to receive the dropped-off materials.

## **Early Pick-Up Procedures**

If you are picking-up your child from school early (prior to 3:00 p.m.), you must come to the guidance office to sign-out your child and they will be waiting for you in the main office. If you know they are going to be leaving early, please have your child bring a note to the guidance office first thing in the morning the day they are leaving early. They will be given a pass to get out of class a few minutes prior to being picked-up. Only parents/guardians or individuals listed on your child's emergency card will be permitted to sign your child out of school. If your child will be returning to school, you do not need to come back in with them. They will report to the main office, sign back in and get a pass to go to class.

## **Eating Lunch with Students**

Due to the number of students we feed each lunch period and the age of our students, no visitors are permitted to eat lunch in the cafeteria.

## **Electronics Do's and Don'ts**

Parents are asked to support the districts policy on use of cell phones during school hours. Please do not call, leave a voice mail or text your child during school hours. This only increases the temptation of our students to use their cell phones during school hours, which will result in consequences. Students may use the main office phone to call home.

## **Fees and Fines**

School fees will be mailed to families during the first months of school. Parents are asked to submit payment for these fees once this bill arrives to your home.

School fines are assessed on late or missing library books. Fines are also assigned to those students that have school property; such as textbooks, that have been lost or damaged.

## **Homework Requests**

Due to the number of students we serve and the number of teachers each student has during the course of a school day, we fulfill requests for homework missed during an absence when a child has been absent for three or more school days. If your child is absent for this length of time and you would like to pick-up his/her homework, please state this when reporting the absence on the attendance line or speak to our attendance or guidance clerk. Homework will be set out in the guidance office and will be available for parents to pick-up between 3:15 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

## **Interim Reports and Report Cards**

Listed below is the interim view and report card distribution dates for the 2013-14 school year. Please sign and return the envelope to school as soon as possible.

<b>Description</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>
Check PASS for interim grade	September 27 <sup>th</sup>	December 6 <sup>th</sup>	February 21 <sup>st</sup>	May 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Report Cards Distributed	November 1 <sup>st</sup>	January 24 <sup>th</sup>	April 4 <sup>th</sup>	Mailed by June 13 <sup>th</sup>

## **Medication**

Students are not permitted to take medication at school (which includes cough drops, throat lozenges, etc.), unless administered by a parent or by school personnel with the appropriate paperwork. All forms for medication to be administered at school can be found on Center's website. However, students with asthma can self-administer the use of an inhaler with the completion of the appropriate paper work.

## **Morning Drop-Off/Afternoon Pick-Up**

Parents that will be dropping students off at Center in the morning are asked to follow the arrows painted in the parking lot. Parents are to pull in between the two rows of parked cars and drop their child off by the crosswalk, where an adult is stationed. Parents are not to drop their child off next to the building, as this is the area for our buses to unload.

Parents that will be picking-up their child in the afternoon, can park in the parking lot or line-up in the same area as morning drop-off.

## **School Visitors**

All school visitors need to sign-in on the visitor log located in the main office and wear a visitor's badge. No visitor is permitted to leave the main office area without following this procedure and first verifying their purpose for entering the instructional wings to the school secretary or attendance clerk.

## **Student Arrival and Dismissal**

### ***Student Arrival:***

- Students are permitted to enter the building (excluding students participating in special activities) at 7:50 a.m. and they will wait in the cafeteria until 8:00 a.m. Students are expected to be in 1<sup>st</sup> period by 8:10 to hear announcements.

### ***Student Dismissal:***

- Students are dismissed for the day at 3:00 p.m. Students are responsible for determining their means to get home; walking, get a ride home or bus. Unlike elementary school, middle school students do not need to inform the office if their means of transportation home from school changes.

## **Students Staying After for Evening Events**

Students not participating in a supervised after school club, activity or sport must leave the school grounds at dismissal (3:00 p.m.). Students wishing to attend after school athletic events, which start at 4:15 p.m., must leave the school and then return no earlier than 4:00 p.m.

## **Students who become Sick at School**

Those students that have a fever at or above 100° or vomit at school must be taken home. Students who become sick at school, yet do not exhibit these symptoms will be given time to relax in the clinic. If students continue to feel sick after this time, a call will be placed to the parents and a decision will be made with the school staff as to whether the child will remain in school or be sent home.

## **Telephone Directory**

Center's phone number is 572-7090 and when you dial, you will hear the following options:

- Option 0 – Main Office
- Option 1 – Employee Directory
- Option 2 – Attendance Line
- Option 3 – Homework Hotline
- Option 4 – Special Announcements
- Option 5 – Clinic
- Option 6 - Guidance

You may also contact teachers and staff directly by dialing their direct line. These phone numbers can be found on the Center's website. Please know that all teacher phones will go directly to voicemail during student instructional hours.

## **Transportation of Students**

Students are to only be transported from school by approved individuals. School staff will only release students to those individuals that are listed on the emergency card or those that have been given permission through written documentation by the custodial parent.

Middle School students are not permitted to ride an alternative bus home. Notes from home stating that a child can ride home on another bus are not accepted.

## **Use of Property and Facilities**

All community groups or other activities that may need to utilize Center's fields or any of the rooms inside of the school have that option. If you would like to make a request to use our facilities, please see the school secretary for a "Facility Usage" form. Each request will be approved based on the availability of the requested space.