

Welcome to Middle School!



2026-2027

Theme: **Steadfast**

Theme Verse: **I Corinthians 15:57-58**

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Welcome to Middle School!

Middle School Parents and Students,

Welcome to middle school at Ankeny Christian Academy! The Middle School Teaching Team is excited for you to join us in the fun and craziness of middle school. We are looking forward to partnering with you and helping you to achieve success spiritually, academically, emotionally, and socially. It is our desire that you learn the academic concepts that will lead you to success as a citizen of the United States. We also desire that you learn the spiritual concepts that will lead you to be a closer follower of Jesus Christ. As the Apostle Paul wrote to the young pastor, Timothy, "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12). This is our prayer and desire for you over your middle school years, that you set a godly example for other believers to follow.

The purpose of this document is to explain what is to come in middle school, specifically 6th grade, and to make you aware of what is expected of you as a part of middle school. This document will also give you some helpful information about how things work and run in middle school.

Please feel free to refer to this information throughout the school year. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact your student's homeroom teacher or the specific teacher to which your question might apply.

In Christ,

The ACA Middle School Teaching Team

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What Is Different in Middle School

1) Student Schedules

- Instead of students having one or two teachers, students will now have six teachers for their core subjects plus teachers for their exploratory classes (band, choir, foreign language, etc.).
- Students will go to the following classes once each day:
 - Bible - Mr. Nihart - Room 37
 - English - Mrs. Wyllie - Room 38
 - Literature - Mrs. Smith - Room 36
 - Math - Mr. Johnson - Room 22
 - Science - Mrs. Fenceroy - Room 24
 - Social Studies - Mrs. Stephenson - Room 21
- Exploratory classes are held in the 5th and 8th periods. Students are required to attend these classes and will be given grades for these classes. They include: art, band, choir, foreign language, and PE .



2) Lockers

- Students have the privilege of using a locker in which to keep their school supplies, lunches, and other things they bring to school. Student behavior at the lockers should be above reproach with no pushing or shoving, yelling, or taking pictures with their phones.
 - The lockers are not the private property of the student. The lockers are the property of Ankeny Christian Academy. As such teachers and administrators have the right to open and search any student's locker when there is reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing..
 - Students are responsible for keeping their lockers clean and organized. Keeping an organized locker will help students to use their five minute passing time between classes more efficiently.
- Other than lunches and water bottles, students should refrain from keeping food in their lockers. Food kept in lockers attracts insects, like ants, that are not desired.
- Students are allowed to decorate their locker, but should refrain from using tape of any kind in hanging pictures or decorations. Magnets are preferred in hanging things in lockers. Of course, all decorations should be school appropriate.
- Students will be responsible for learning their locker combinations. Teachers discourage students from sharing their combination with others, as this could lead to other students opening lockers other than their own.
- Backpacks are not allowed in the classrooms, therefore all backpacks must be kept in student lockers. Choose your backpacks with this in mind.



3) Chapel



- Students in middle school will go to chapel once a week on Wednesdays. They will also be involved in Engage Groups that meet to discuss the chapel message. This is a time for the students to discuss and apply God's Word to their daily lives.

- Students are expected to bring their Bible to chapel and follow along with the speaker. Students are also encouraged to bring paper and pen in order to take notes. Students are not allowed to do schoolwork or to draw during chapel.

- ACA does not require a separate dress code for chapel days. The regular school dress code applies.

4) General Dress Code Guidelines

- Clothing needs to be in good condition with no holes, whether accidental or on purpose.
- Printed messages/pictures on any garment should be positive, non-distracting, and should not promote non-Christian values or advertise for secular music groups.
- Earrings for female students are the only acceptable body piercing.
- Undergarments should not show during any activity.
- Students should avoid excessively tight or form-fitting garments.



Tops

- Midriff, either front or back, may not be exposed.
- Cleavage must not be visible at any time.
- Shirts with an open back are not allowed.
- Camisoles, strapless tops or halter-tops may not be worn as a single garment.
- Shirts must have a sleeve of some form and cover the top of the shoulders. Off the shoulder shirts are not permitted.
- Shirts must not extend past the hem of the shorts.

Bottoms

- Pajama or flannel pants may not be worn.
- Lettering across the seat is not permitted.
- Leggings may only be worn under a dress or skirt that is above mid-thigh.
- Shorts must reach mid-thigh or lower.

Dresses/Skirts

- Skirts/dresses must reach mid-thigh or lower.
- Slits of skirt or dress must reach mid-thigh or lower.
- Dresses must have a sleeve of some form and cover the top of the shoulders.

Shoes

- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- No slippers.



Hats and Hair



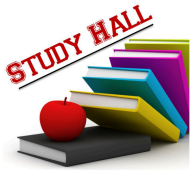
- Hats/hoods are not allowed during the school day.
- Hair should be clean and neatly trimmed. It should be kept out of the eyes, be a natural color and a non-distracting style. Non-distracting hair weave colors are acceptable.
- Facial hair must be neatly trimmed.
- No extreme hairstyles such as mohawks are allowed.

5) PE Class

- All students must have separate, clean, non-marking shoes for PE class.
- Students will be expected to change into appropriate PE attire which is within the standard dress code guidelines. See the school handbook for more specific dress code guidelines.



6) Study Hall



- When students have a study hall, they are expected to bring academic work with them. Computers may or may not be allowed to be used during study hall time.
- Study Hall is not a time for socializing. Students should refrain from talking without permission and should use this time to complete assignments and to ask questions of the teachers.

7) Demerits

- Starting in 6th grade, students will be following the demerit system of discipline. While teachers do not want to issue demerits, in order to maintain a classroom environment they will be given when deemed necessary.
- If, after verbal warnings, a student's behavior does not conform to the expectations given by the teacher, a student will be given a demerit. Demerits can be given for misbehavior (talking without permission, being disruptive in class, being disrespectful), as well as for organizational infractions (unprepared for class, being tardy to class, etc.).
- Parents/guardians will be notified via email when a student is issued a demerit.
- Once a student reaches three demerits, he/she will be assigned an after school detention. Once a student reaches three after school detentions, he/she will be assigned an in-school suspension.
- Should a student's behavior continue not to meet the standards set forth by the teacher, he/she may be placed on behavior probation.
 - Please see the Academic and Behavior Probation section.
- There may be some instances when a student's behavior will necessitate being assigned an automatic after school detention or suspension. Such instances may include plagiarism, cheating, or destruction of school property.



- The Middle School Teaching Team and administration reserve the right to amend a student's discipline plan should his/her behavior be egregious.

8) Homework and Studying

- In middle school there is an expectation that students will have homework and will have to study for tests and quizzes.
- Most homework assignments are due the next day at the beginning of class, unless told otherwise by the teacher. Any unfinished homework assignments may be given a reduced grade.



- A student may be assigned an after school homework detention if they accumulate several missing or late assignments. During the homework detention, the student will be required to complete any assignments that are missing or late.
 - Many teachers will give study guides for unit or chapter tests. Oftentimes these study guides are given to the students approximately three days to one week before the test date. It is expected of students that they use these study guides to help them to properly study and prepare for the tests.
- Students are expected to do their own work at all times unless specifically instructed by a teacher. This means that students are expected to not copy answers from their classmates on homework assignments, quizzes, and tests. Any confirmed incidents of plagiarism and or cheating will result in the student receiving a zero for that assignment and a possible after school detention.

9) Energy Drinks/Highly Caffeinated Drinks

- The consumption of sodas by students during lunch is strongly discouraged, but not prohibited. Should the consumption of these beverages cause a student's behavior to become unacceptable, this privilege may be revoked.
 - Reminder: Students are only allowed to drink water during classes.
- Middle school students are not allowed to consume any kind of highly caffeinated drinks during the school day. This may include some sodas and energy drinks. Any drink that contains more than 60 mg per serving of caffeine is considered to be an energy drink and is not allowed.



10) Academic and Behavior Probation

• Academic Probation

- **Definition:** A student is academic deficient when they receive two or more Ds or one or more Fs for a reporting period. A reporting period includes mid-term grades and end of the quarter grades.
- All students who appear to be academically deficient for three consecutive reporting periods (i.e. combination of mid-terms and end of the quarter grades) may be placed on academic probation and on a student academic achievement contract.



- Students who continue to exhibit academic deficiencies may be recommended for academic testing to determine if any learning disabilities exist and to recommend academic accommodations with the academic strategist.
- Students who continue to struggle with academic achievement may be required to meet with the administrator/principal to determine the student's future at ACA.

● Behavior Probation

- **Definition:** A student is placed on behavior probation when they reach the level of being assigned to serve an in-school suspension. An in-school suspension is assigned when a student is issued nine demerits (or the equivalent of) within a year.
- **Purpose:** The purpose of placing a student on behavior probation for continued misbehavior is to:
 - Make the student aware of their continued misbehavior.
 - Hold the student accountable for complying with the Student Code of Conduct.
 - Bring the student to a place of godly repentance (II Corinthians 7:10) and restoration (Galatians 6:1).
- Students who are placed on behavior probation will meet with the principal(s) and parents to create a written behavior contract. This behavior contract will include objectives and specific performance tasks that the student must meet. The contract will be signed by the student, parents, and the principal(s).
 - The behavior contract will include:
 - Expected behaviors.
 - Conditions under which the student will remain on or removed from probation.
 - Consequences for continued misbehavior.
- Students may also be referred to the Discipleship Director for biblical counseling and mentoring.



General Middle School Rules

While each teacher and classroom may have its own specific classroom rules, there are some general middle school rules that students must follow in order to be successful throughout the school year. These general rules are as follows:

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Be Resourceful

1) Be Respectful

- Students are expected to be respectful of the teacher, their classmates, and the property in the classroom.
- Students should be respectful in how they talk to and respond to the teacher and classmates.



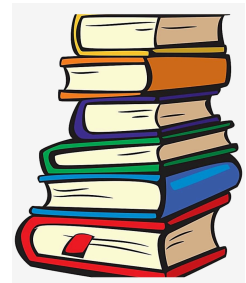
- Students are expected to treat the desks, chairs, books, and the property of others respectfully. If it isn't theirs, they shouldn't touch it without permission.

2) Be Responsible

- Students are expected to come to class prepared with what they need for that class. Generally, those things include: subject binder, pens, pencils, notebook paper, and completed homework. Students should not expect teachers to supply pens, pencils, or paper.
- Should students fail to bring the necessary materials with them to class, they may be given a demerit for being unprepared for class.
- Students are expected to be on time to class. They are given five minutes between classes; they must use this time efficiently in order to use their lockers, the bathroom, and the water fountain and still be in class on time. Being late to class will only be excused if given permission by the teacher.

3) Be Resourceful

- It is the responsibility of the students to come to class with extra things to do. Should students finish their assignment early, they are required to have something educational to do. They can work on assignments from another class (if they brought it with them), or they can read a book. Chromebook usage during this time will not be allowed unless specific permission is given by the teacher.
- In general, students will not be allowed to return to their locker to get those things mentioned above.



Student Expectations

1) Attendance

- Class attendance becomes very important in middle school. Therefore, we would ask that any doctor appointments be scheduled during study hall, lunch, and exploratory class times. We understand, however, that this may not always be possible. In this case, students are responsible for getting any missed assignments from the teachers. These missed assignments will be due at the same time as if the student was in class, unless an extension is given by the teacher.
- If a student is absent from class because of illness and/or family trips, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain the work that will be missed from the teacher. Teachers may or may not require students to make up any missed assignments. This applies to both planned and unplanned absences.
- Remember that if a student is absent from school because of illness or family trips, they have the number of days absent plus one day to complete their make-up work. For



example, if John Smith is absent for five days, he will have six class days to complete and turn in the make-up work.

- When pre-planned absences (family trips) are scheduled, teachers are not required to provide homework assignments to the students prior to the absence.

2) Excessive tardiness

- Being punctual to school and to classes is a very important and essential part of being a student.
- Students who accumulate three unexcused tardies to school or class will be assigned to serve an after-school detention.
- After-school detentions will be assigned for students who reach three, six, or nine unexcused tardies per semester.
- Should a student's unexcused tardiness become excessive (9 or more in a semester), the student will receive a demerit for every unexcused tardy to school and class. The disciplinary steps regarding demerits will then be followed.
- Should a student's tardiness continue to be excessive a meeting will be scheduled with parents to discuss the student's future at ACA.

3) Homework & Late Work



- Students should expect to be given homework assignments on a daily basis, most of which will be due the next day.
- Unless told otherwise by the teacher, homework assignments are due at the beginning of class. If assignments are not completed at that time, they may be considered late and given a grade reduction. Refer to each teacher's syllabus for specific information on late work policies.
- There will not be any homework assignments given on Wednesdays that will be due on Thursdays. In most cases, assignments given on Wednesdays will be due on Friday.
- Homework detentions may be assigned to students who make a practice of not turning in assignments.

4) Cell Phones & Smart Watches

Smartphones and personal smart devices (ex: smart watches, video game devices) may not be used by students during school hours (8:00 am-3:00 pm). We understand that many students will bring phones to school for travel emergencies and after school responsibilities and activities; our expectation is that we will not see them and students will not use them during the school day.

- Upon arrival, students will place their device(s) into a slot box location (phone locker).
- Each student will be assigned a slot.
- The device(s) must be turned in when the student arrives at school. This is one way our school administration will take attendance and track tardies.
- The device(s) will be picked up at the end of the school day or when the student leaves school.



- The slot box/phone locker is mobile and will be moved to a secure location in the front office for the duration of the school day. If students check out of school earlier, their phones will be accessible by request in the front office.
- If a student's smartphone or personal smart device is visible during school hours, the device will be brought to the office and the following actions will be taken:
 - First Offense: Office personnel will notify a parent/guardian and will require the parent/guardian to pick up the device from the school office. The student will receive a demerit.
 - Second Offense: Office personnel will notify a parent/guardian and will require the parent/guardian to pick up the device from the school office. The student will receive a detention.
 - Third Offense: Office personnel will notify a parent/guardian and will require the parent/guardian to pick up the device from the school office. The student will receive a suspension (either in-school or out of school).
- The school will grant exceptions to this policy when there is documentation from a doctor or educational professional which indicates the student needs access to the phone for specific health related reasons during certain portions of the day. We will work with the students and families in these situations.
- Any student who uses an electronic device to take photos in a restroom or locker room will be suspended.
- Earbuds/headphones are not allowed to be used in the classroom unless permission is given by the teacher.

5) Computers

- Beginning in middle school many teachers will give assignments that must be researched and/or completed by the use of computers. To ensure the proper use and care of the ACA-owned computers, the following guidelines will be followed:
 - **In-Classroom Availability & Use**
 - Each middle school classroom will house a set of computers for students to use in that particular classroom.
 - Students may only open and use a computer with explicit permission from the teacher.
 - Computers must be used strictly for approved class activities and learning assignments.
 - **Charging Cart Responsibilities**
 - Students are strictly responsible for returning their assigned computer to the cart before leaving the classroom.
 - Computers must be plugged into the designated charging cable so they are ready for the next class period.
 - Students must place the computer into its correct numbered slot.
 - **Home Check-out Procedure**
 - Students can check out a computer ONLY for the completion of a school assignment - not for personal use.



- Students requiring a computer for home use must check one out at the end of the day from their 1st period teacher.
- Checked-out computers must be returned to the 1st period teacher the following school day.
- Students and parents assume responsibility for the computer's safety and proper care while off school campus.
- **Improper Use and/or Damage**
 - A demerit will be issued for any student found using their assigned computer improperly or without permission.
 - Continued improper use may result in more severe consequences, which may include computer privileges being suspended or revoked.
 - Any cost incurred to repair damage to an ACA-owned computer will be the responsibility of the students and/or parents.
- Teachers and Administration have access to *GoGuardian* and will monitor a student's use of the computer. *GoGuardian* will track every website and app used by the students and will alert teachers and administrators when a student is using or viewing inappropriate material. Again, any habitual misuse of a computer will be cause for disciplinary action.

6) Behavior

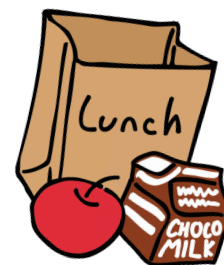
- In the Classroom
 - Students are expected to abide by the rules and regulations set down by each individual teacher. While each teacher may conduct their classes differently, they all expect students to conduct themselves with common courtesy and respect.
 - Students are expected to remain in their seats during the class time unless given permission by the teacher.
 - Students are expected to maintain the highest level of behavior as a way of honoring God, their family, and themselves.
 - Students are expected to keep the area around their desks neat and clean, and to pick up after themselves. They should make sure to push in their chairs at the end of class and to walk out of the classroom.
 - Remember, it is the teacher that dismisses students from class - not the bell.



- In the Hallway
 - Students are expected to move through the hallways respectfully and conscientiously. Students are not to be running, pushing, shoving, shouting, yelling, or in general being disruptive. Any unnecessary physical contact between students (pushing, shoving, pinching, hitting, etc.) will not be tolerated, and may result in a demerit being given.
 - Students are also expected to keep the area (the floor) near their locker free from papers, pens, pencils, or anything else that may fall from their locker. It is their responsibility to clean up after themselves.



- In the Lunchroom
 - During lunch time, students are expected to find a place to sit at the lunch tables and to quietly eat their lunch. They have the freedom to choose where they sit and with whom they sit, but that freedom may be taken away should their behavior be disruptive.
 - Students are expected to use quiet voices and not to shout over others who are talking. There are other grades still in session during middle school lunch and excessive noise is distracting.
 - Students are expected to clean up any messes that they make while eating. This includes picking up dropped food items, wiping up any spills, and throwing away their own garbage.



7) Bathroom Usage

- Students should not assume that they will be allowed to leave the classroom to use the bathroom. They are expected to use the bathroom during the five minutes between classes.
- Teachers understand that emergencies happen, but they should be infrequent and not an habitual occurrence.
- If a student has a medical condition that requires that they use the bathroom on a frequent basis, a note from a medical doctor should be on file in the office or with the principal stating this need.
- As a matter of safety and liability, teachers are hesitant to allow students out of the classroom for any reason.



Miscellaneous Information

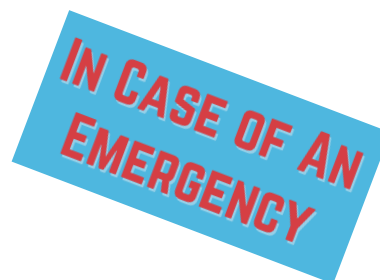
1) Assignments and Grades



- For information regarding students' current grades in each subject be sure to use your log-in access to JMC. For information on how to access JMC, please inquire in the school office or ask Melanie Frericks. Teachers update and post grades in JMC at least once a week.
- Most teachers post assignments, quizzes, and tests on Google Classroom. Students and parents can access information regarding missed assignments or upcoming assignments using Google Classroom. Parents can obtain access to Google Classroom by using their student's log-in information.

2) Emergencies

- Occasionally emergencies will occur. In those instances students should obtain permission from a teacher to use their cell phones, or permission will be given to use the phone in the main office.



- Should parents need to get in touch with their student, they should call the school office, who will then relay a message to the teacher and student.
- Remember, forgetting PE clothes or homework assignments does not constitute an emergency.

3) Communication Between Parents and Teachers

- Starting in 6th grade, teachers no longer send home a weekly communication, such as a newsletter. It becomes the responsibility of the student to communicate necessary information with parents.



- At times, teachers will send out emails to parents regarding upcoming events, large assignments or projects. Please read this information carefully and plan accordingly.
- Teachers will communicate information with parents regarding student academic progress, student behavior and demerits, along with any other vital information. Most of the time this will be done via email. Should a teacher find it necessary, they may communicate via the phone.

• Should parents need to communicate information to teachers, feel free to contact them via email. Email addresses are in the front of this document.

4) Illness

- Should a student become ill while at home, they are to stay home until their temperature is normal for 24 hours.
 - Conditions that warrant staying home from school include: head lice, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, pink eye, and other communicable diseases.
 - Also consider keeping a student at home if there are other illnesses or conditions that would impede their learning while at school.
- Should a student become ill at school, the teacher will send them to the school nurse.
 - If called, parents/guardians are expected to arrive as promptly as possible, or make other arrangements for their student to be picked up within an hour of notification.
- The school office should be notified when a student will be absent or tardy to school.



5) Semester Finals

- Students in 7th and 8th grades will take semester final exams in December and in May. These final exams are comprehensive over each semester's concepts, and make up 10% of a student's semester grade.
 - 7th grade students will take semester final exams for Math and English.
 - 8th grade students will take semester final exams for Math, English, History, and Science.



- Students in 6th grade will take chapter or unit tests that are not considered a final exam.
- Tests given during the semester finals days cannot be given early. Students are expected to be in attendance for those days, with the exception of extreme emergencies. Missed semester exams (except for in extreme emergencies) may result in a grade reduction.
- First semester final exams are scheduled for **December 16-18, 2026.**
- Second semester final exams are scheduled for **May 24-26, 2027.**

6) Notable Events

- Students in middle school will experience new events during the school year. The following are a few of the special events that are planned for the middle school students.
 - Middle School Retreats
 - Fall Retreat - **September 11, 2026**
 - Spring Retreat - **February 26, 2027**
 - Science Fair
 - The 6th and 8th grade classes will participate in the Science Fair on **January 28, 2027**. Students will complete a scientific based project based on scientific experiments or ideas.
 - More information will be sent home when the time for this project gets closer.
 - JA Biztown
 - The 6th grade students will participate in JA Biztown with the 5th graders on **November 3, 2026**.
 - More information will be given as this date gets closer.
- Parents will be needed to help these events be successful. If interested in helping, please contact the appropriate teacher or the main office.



Information not addressed in this document can be located in the School Handbook found on the ACA website. (www.acaeagles.net)