

# SYKESVILLE MIDDLE

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# SCHOOL

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*Where Students Meet Success*

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Dear Sykesville Families:

It's hard to believe that it is almost time for the 2020-2021 school year to begin; but it is just around the corner. I know that this year, starting in a virtual world, is something that none of us have experienced before. However, I feel that students, teachers, parents, and administrators will work together to make this the best educational experience for our students. I hope you have had an enjoyable summer with family and friends. Whether you are new to Sykesville Middle School or a returning student/family, we look forward to you being a part of the Sykesville family and hope you become involved in our school. I encourage every student and parent to embrace the opportunity to make this a great school year.

Staff members have been busy over the summer preparing for the 2020-2021 school year. Teachers and administrators have participated in professional development to improve the instructional opportunities for your children in the virtual world. Our staff continues to refine assessments, align instruction to standards, and improve communication with students and parents to ensure nothing but success. Our #1 goal is to improve student learning. Regardless of where students begin the year, we want to help them in advancing their critical thinking, knowledge, skills, and ability to problem solve. If at any time you have a question about what is occurring in your child's class, please contact your student's teacher. Your child's classroom teacher is always the place to start. We all need to work together to benefit our students.

During this time of social distancing we want to ensure that each of our middle school students continue to have access to high-quality curriculum and assignments. We plan to deliver instruction through a virtual learning environment and we need your support to ensure the success of our efforts! Please take a moment to review our plan below and talk with your child about the importance of continuing their education during this time.

What you can expect from our middle school teachers:

- Our system will be using Google Classroom for instruction. Students will receive a link to join a classroom via their CCPS username and password. Download the FAQ sheet at the bottom of this letter for student laptop questions.
- Attendance will be taken daily. Students have an Attendance Classroom with one question – “Are you here?” The student clicks “Yes”. Students have a generous window of time to click “Yes” – from 6 am on the day of instruction to 5 am the following day. Example: September 8, 2020 at 6 am till September 9, 2020 at 5 am.
- Students will receive instruction in all classes listed on their schedules in Home Access. Core academic classes (ELA, Social Studies, Math, Science) will be taught every day. Related Arts classes will be taught on an “A” day “B” day schedule. Please check schedules in Home Access to see what class is scheduled for which day. You should also pay attention to the semester. Band, Chorus, PE, and 7th/8th grade Spanish are full year classes. Art, Health, Tech Ed., and FACS are by semester.
- Synchronous instruction will be delivered each day for a minimum of 50 percent of the scheduled class time. Asynchronous time will be dedicated to independent work where the students can ask questions of the teacher. The teacher will let the student know the times of synchronous and asynchronous teaching.

- A syllabus will be provided to families and students will receive letter grades.
- Students should login each day to check for assignments and instructions from the teacher.
- Teachers will post relevant supplemental materials to support students with instructional delivery of content such as annotated notes, PowerPoint presentations and website links.

What you can expect from your middle school student:

- Students should login to each of their Google Classrooms on a daily basis.
- Students will need to complete all required assignments and submit these as directed by their teacher.
- If a student is having internet issues, we can provide hard copies.
- Students are encouraged to ask questions and email teachers when needed.
- Students should follow school follow our three “R’s” Respect, Responsibility, and Resiliency while in the classroom.

How can you help?

- Ensure that your child is checking their Google Classrooms on a daily basis.
- Ensure that your child marks himself/herself present in the attendance classroom.
- Ensure that your child is completing all required assignments and submitting them to teachers in a timely manner.
- Encourage your child to reach out to their teacher if they have any questions or concerns or need any extra help!
- If you have any questions, please reach out to the teacher or administration.

We are looking forward to this school year and making it a great experience for our teachers, students, and families. I feel that working together, we will be able to enhance student learning as we develop these young, productive citizens of society.

Thank you,

David Bortz  
Principal