



Stetson Hills

Middle School Handbook

Summary of Handbook

Middle school, composed of the 7th and 8th grades, can be a challenging and exciting time for students, parents, and staff. This Handbook is a guide to life in the middle school environment and is intended to give structure and comfort to all of those who work at Stetson Hills Middle School. The purpose of Stetson Hills Middle School is to give students the skills they will need to meet 7th and 8th grade standards and be successful in high school.

Stallion PACE.

It is the belief of Stetson Hills Middle School Staff that 7th and 8th grade students are ready to assume responsibility for their behavior. Thus, they will participate in our PACE Program. **PACE** expectations are demonstrated by **being respectful, being responsible, and being safe.**

It is the goal of Stetson Hills to provide all students with behavioral expectations that are clearly defined, taught and reinforced, to encourage positive relationships and exemplary citizenship. Our student discipline data shows that students are being sent to the office for defiance/disrespect and minor aggressive acts. When that happens, they are not learning, and this interferes with the learning of others. We need to help all of our students to be successful academically and behaviorally. When students struggle with reading—we teach. When students struggle with math or music—we teach. When students struggle with behavior we need to teach them how to succeed.

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Middle School Staff Directory

7th Grade

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Counselor

Jenn Tollefson	jennifer.tollefson@dvusd.org	623-445-5317	Room 207
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Special Area

Carissa Brnilovich (PE)	carissa.brnilovich@dvusd.org	623-445-5348	Room MPR
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Katie Allen (STEM)	katie.allen@dvusd.org	623-445-5379	Room 222

Student Expectations

In the Classroom

Students are expected to:

- ...enter classrooms quietly.
- ...participate in class.
- ...treat classrooms as places of learning.
- ...leave electronic devices, food, and non-water beverages in their bags during class time.

Around Campus

Students are expected to:

- ...behave as if younger students are watching them and learn how a developing young adult should act and behave as a student in middle school.
- ...move with a sense of urgency when traveling on campus - not loiter on campus.
- ...arrive safely on campus NO CROSSING THROUGH THE PARKING LOT, as it is unsafe to do so.

In the Cafeteria

Students are expected to:

- ...enter and exit the cafeteria quietly and walk, not run.
- ...sit at the appropriate place in the cafeteria.
- ...present a hall pass if they will be eating lunch outside the cafeteria.
- ...conduct themselves with dignity inside the cafeteria and respect the monitors who supervise.
- ...keep food in the cafeteria.
- ...clean up any messes created while in the cafeteria.

In the Bathroom

Students are expected to:

- ...to check in with their teacher, and sign out when/where appropriate
- ...get in, do their business, and get out again
- ...be respectful of the facilities and keep them clean
- ...not loiter

Policies/Procedures

Planners/Behavior Cards: We will be relying heavily on our student planners this school year for student accountability, because of this, ALL students MUST have their planners on them every day. This is both to help keep students accountable with behavior, and also to help keep students accountable for weekly assignments. **Students who do not have their planners on them will be assigned a lunch detention for that day.**

Learning Center (Room 608/408): The learning center is meant for specific students who have been identified as needing this space to work. It is NOT a place to hang out in between classes or during lunch. Students who are using the learning center are expected to be in their classes on time, and not using the learning center as a place to avoid class, otherwise they will be marked as absent/tardy. If a student is needed in the learning center, Mrs. Lloyd or Mrs. Lynch will either call the teacher or come and get the student. Students who are in the learning center for non-academic reasons will be required to make up academic minutes during lunch or in lieu of quarterly rewards.

Bathroom Use: This applies to students outside of documented medical issues on file with the nurse. Students are allowed to use the restroom within the first five minutes of each class AFTER checking in with the teacher. If a student uses the restroom after the first minutes, it creates disruptions to learning and work avoidance opportunities. If excessive bathroom use is noticed, additional communication will be made.

Banned Food/Beverages

- Due to the danger they pose for students, caffeine and energy drinks are banned from Stetson Hills, including during lunch. Typically, energy drinks have warning signs printed on them, listing *18 years old as an appropriate age* for consumption.
- Gum is banned from Stetson Hills. While gum does have transitory benefits, the nuisance factor (in class disruption, gum under tables, gum on the sidewalk) makes it inappropriate for the school setting. Banned food or drink will be confiscated and will not be returned to students.

After School Activities: Students who plan to participate in afterschool activities need to arrange transportation after the activities are over. Club sponsors and coaches cannot leave campus until all participating students are picked up, so it is imperative to be timely and have good communication. Please note younger siblings cannot wait on campus while middle school students are participating in afterschool activities.

Bikes and Other Wheeled Transportation

Bikes and other wheeled transportation must be stored in the bike racks on campus. Due to the safety of pedestrians and cars moving in the parking lot, bikes may not be ridden on campus at any time. Non-transportation wheeled items, including but not limited to skateboards, roller skates, inline skates, Wheelie shoes and scooters are not allowed to be used or stored anywhere on campus before, during, or after school. While walking bikes off campus, it is expected that students use the crosswalks when entering/exiting campus and respect the crossing guards stationed around campus to ensure student safety.

Dress Code: In order to maintain a safe learning environment on campus, administration, teachers and staff will enforce the dress code as expressed in the DVUSD Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook. If there is an issue, students will be asked to correct the issue. If the issue cannot be corrected the student will be asked to go to the nurse. Any staff

member on campus can dress code students. Parents may be contacted and asked to bring appropriate clothing. Hats are not to be worn inside for any reason. Students wearing hats inside will be asked to remove them. If this behavior continues, the hat will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day. Violations include:

- Bra straps showing
- Racer Back shirts exposing the shoulder blades
- Shorts exposing the butt
- Shirts exposing the midriff
- Spaghetti Straps shirts/dresses
- Pajamas on a "non-spirit day"
- Hats/Beanies may be worn, but are to be removed when entering ANY school building.
- Slippers on a "non-PJ spirit day"
- Inappropriate slogans

Behavior/Discipline

Tickets/Rewards: Tickets/points will be issued daily to be used at the 7th grade and 8th grade store to reimburse positive behaviors. In addition, students will be rewarded with field trips and quarterly parties when applicable.

Cell Phones/Electronics: It is important to understand that the school and district have plans in place of notifying families of emergencies if needed. There are also procedures in place for parents to call the school and notify students of emergency situations they need to be aware of. Per DVUSD policy all cell phones must be powered off and placed in students' backpacks. The Stetson Hills Middle School policy does include lunch and recess as well.

Disrespect/Defiance: We are professionals with multiple degrees and certifications in our field. We do expect a certain level of respect from our students, as they should expect from us. We have all worked in middle school for quite some time. We know that bucking authority, testing boundaries, and expressing themselves is par for the course. However, that does not grant students the excuse, nor the freedom, to be blatantly disrespectful, demeaning, or defiant in our classrooms.

Technology Misuse: We expect the students to use their technology responsibly. This includes being on the correct website as instructed at all times, completing the assignments expected in that class- during that class period, using GoogleDocs for assignments- not as chat boxes, remaining off of gaming websites.

Tardies: Students are expected to be in their scheduled class at the START time of class. If a student is NOT in their assigned class at the START time, they will be considered tardy. Tardies will be marked on behavior cards and can result in further disciplinary action and loss of privileged activities such as dances, sports, reward parties, etc.

Excessive Absences: Students are expected to be actively involved in the classroom and that is hard to do when they are not at school. Because of this, unless there is a medical reason, students need to be in the classroom as much as possible.

Classroom Transitions: Students are expected to report to their regularly scheduled class before making any additional stops. This includes the restroom, another teacher's classroom, or Learning Center check-ins. All students have three minutes to move to their next class. Beyond those three minutes students will be assigned a negative for being tardy.

Lunch/Recess Behavior Problems: Students are expected to follow the rules set forth by the school during lunch and recess. These rules include:

- Sit at the appropriate place in the cafeteria
- Not throw food and clean up after themselves when they finish eating
- Walk to and from the cafeteria and to the playground as well as back to class
- Hang out in the designated area set forth by the monitors, teachers, and administration
- Respect the monitors/teachers on duty

Grades and Reporting

The **purpose** of Standards-Based Grading (SBG) is to measure a student's performance and product against defined Grade Level Expectations. In a SBG and reporting system, grades reflect what a student knows and can do, as outlined in the Arizona State Standards. Teachers in Grades K–8 will base report card grades on academic achievement only.

Students Role in Learning

Students become self-directed in learning about themselves as a learner. They have to analyze their own study habits to figure out what actually works for them, this helps students retain knowledge.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not accepted by any means or circumstances. Students can be sure to not plagiarize by following these guidelines taken from the English Department of George Mason University.

"Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. ...While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves (Statement of English Department at George Mason University)."

*****If evidence of plagiarism is found in a student's work, they will lose credit for the assignment, and lose the opportunity to retake it. A second incident will warrant a referral to the office.*****

Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools in Grades K-8

After careful consideration and in alignment with the developmental needs of our students and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), DVUSD has determined that the use of Large Language Models (LLMs), such as ChatGPT, is not suitable for students in grades K-8 (under 13 years of age) and will not be utilized or endorsed in academic contexts.

Extra Credit: Middle School Classes DO NOT give/accept EXTRA CREDIT! It is a student's responsibility to do their BEST the first time they sit down to complete ANY assignment/assessment at school.

Grade Scales: Students in 3rd through 12th grades will receive marks for their proficiency toward the grade level standards using the following scale. All gradebook entries in the "Assessment" category will have at least one standard tagged and scored. Gradebook entries in the "Coursework" or "Practice" categories can also have standards tagged and scored.

4 = Highly Proficient

3 = Proficient

2 = Partially Proficient

1 = Minimally Proficient

Students in 3rd through 12th grades will also, receive marks for their overall performance in each course of study using the following letter grade scale.

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 0-59%

Grades of "D" and above are passing marks. A course grade of "F" indicates that the student has failed the course.

Missing Assignments and Late Work:

Missing work will be treated as such:

Coursework

- The assignment will be marked with the "Missing" special code in the gradebook
- A zero ("0") will be entered as the score for the assignment in the gradebook (grades 3-12)
- If the work is submitted as Late Work (see terms below), the zero ("0") assignment score will be changed to reflect the student's actual score with no deductions or penalties

Assessment

- If the work is not submitted as Late Work or does not meet conditions for Late Work, the score for the assignment will be entered into the gradebook as a 49%.

In order for **Late Work** to be accepted, students must meet the following parameters:

Assignment is not due within the class period

Assignment is not a timed activity (such as a Quick-Write Essay)

Assignment is not a Long-Term assignment (over multiple weeks)

Assignment is turned in within the following time frame:

3-8 Grades: Within 5 school days after the end of the unit

If a student meets the above criteria, he/she will be issued full credit for the work submitted (no added penalties or caps on the grade that can be earned). The teacher will mark the student's assignment with the "Late" special code. If the assignment is an assessment, the proficiency level of the standards attached will be entered.

Retake/Reperformance Policy:

Retake: The student completes another assessment of the same learning targets. The assessment to be retaken may be in the same format or a different format. The higher of the two scores will be entered in the gradebook.*

Reperformance: The student will be reassessed on the same learning target later in the marking period as part of the instruction cycle, thus providing an additional measurement of the learning. All reperformance scores related to the learning target will be entered in the gradebook.

Retakes are allowed for assessments in which scores are entered into the gradebook, for full credit, if reperformance opportunities will not be available during the marking period or in addition to reperformance opportunities during the marking period. Once a student has met the criterion for reassessment, the new score will not be capped or penalized. This ensures that the student's grade accurately reports the student's academic performance. Retakes can be in another format. In other words, if a student qualifies to retake an assessment, he or she may be assessed with several constructed response test items on the second attempt rather than a multiple choice exam as was administered on the first attempt.

In order to earn a retake opportunity, a student must complete all of the following:

- Complete all formative coursework related to the content/skill assessed
- Consult with the teacher
- Submit a reassessment plan or application, if required by the teacher

A reassessment plan must be scheduled within 10 school days after receiving the assessment score

Students are expected to obtain all materials introduced during their absences, excused or unexcused.

It is not the teacher's responsibility to inform absent students of missing work. All assignments/handouts will be posted in the appropriate place in the classroom and/or on the teacher's canvas page..

Promotion/Retention Criteria for Grades 7/8

Seventh and eighth grade students must pass all core classes: mathematics, language arts, science and social studies in order to be reassigned. Students who have an overall failing grade for one or more core classes, will have the option to take summer school in order to avoid retention.

Stetson Hills Middle School Handbook Agreement Form

Please have a parent/guardian and the student sign and date this form prior to turning it into his/her homeroom teacher.

Student Signature:

I, _____ (students full name) have read and understand the Stetson Hills Middle School Handbook, and agree to abide by it.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature:

I, _____ (parent/guardian) have read and understand the Stetson Hills Middle School Handbook, and agree to abide by it.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____