



TCMS Parent Newsletter

"Where Hustle and Harmony Abound and Student Learning is First!"

February/March

IMPORTANT DATES

- ◆ Feb. 1—Character Ed lunch for January
- ◆ Feb. 5—Progress Reports
- ◆ Feb. 10—Scoliosis screening 6th/8th grades
- ◆ Feb. 12—Valentine Dance 7th/8th grades, 6-8 p.m.
- ◆ Feb. 16-19 — 6th grade Science Academy
- ◆ Feb. 25—FCA Banquet, 6 p.m.
- ◆ Feb. 26—Regional National History Day Competition
- ◆ Feb. 29—Blood Drive
- ◆ Feb. 29—Character Ed lunch for February
- ◆ Mar. 2—Read Across America Day
- ◆ Mar. 2-3—SLO Assessments
- ◆ Mar. 3—Spanish 9 weeks test
- ◆ Mar. 4—ELA 9 weeks test
- ◆ Mar. 7—Writing 9 weeks test
- ◆ Mar. 8—Math 9 weeks test
- ◆ Mar. 9—Science 9 weeks test
- ◆ Mar. 10—Social Studies 9 weeks test
- ◆ Mar. 11—End of 3rd Nine Weeks
- ◆ Mar. 14—Student Holiday/Tcher workday
- ◆ Mar. 18—Report cards
- ◆ Mar. 24—Parent Advisory Council workshop
- ◆ Mar. 25—Honor Roll Assemblies
- ◆ Mar. 29—Character Ed lunch for March

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Thompson to Become Next TCMS Principal

Thomas County Middle School (TCMS) Associate Principal Jamie Thompson has been appointed principal designee to assume the role effective June 1, following Dr. Kathy Keown's retirement. The Thomas County Board of Education approved the appointment at its meeting on January 12.

Originally from Ochlocknee, Thompson is a graduate of Thomas County Central High School (TCCHS). After graduating from the University of Georgia, he began teaching English in White

County, Georgia, in 2000. His career with the Thomas County School System began in 2003 at TCCHS where he taught English/Language Arts. Thompson furthered his education obtaining degrees in counseling and educational leadership from Valdosta State University. He has completed coursework for his doctoral degree and is currently completing his dissertation.

Thompson has extensive experience in education, serving as a counselor at TCCHS and Hand-In-Hand Primary School, as well as assistant principal at TCCHS and as associate principal at TCMS.

Thompson considers it an honor to be given the opportunity to lead Thomas County Middle School. He said, "TCMS is an excellent campus with great students and teachers. We enjoy the support of a fantastic group of parents and the best community in Georgia. I want to thank Dr. Dusty Kornegay and the Thomas County School Board for trusting me with the position. I'm also grateful to the current and past leaders in the system who have given me instruction and guidance."

Thompson has been a part of the Thomas County School System for 13 years.

"I hope to continue some of the great traditions of Thomas County Middle School," Thompson said. "Mr. Earl Williams' mantra of 'Hustle and Harmony' still resonates with me from my time as a student at the middle school. More recently, Mr. Van Cowart, Dr. Debra Knight, and Dr. Kathy Keown have worked to make TCMS one of the best middle schools in Georgia."

CONGRATULATIONS, MR. THOMPSON!

Happy Valentine's Day



Help your child develop a study system to tackle chapter tests



If your child tends to study by the “seat of his pants” whenever an end-of-chapter test approaches, it’s time to overhaul his habits! Help him develop a system for studying textbook chapters—one he can use anytime a test looms.

Suggest that he:

1. Start by reading the first section of the chapter. He may be tempted to race through and finish the whole thing, but tell him to resist the urge. He’ll remember more if he studies one section at a time.
2. Imagine what questions his teacher might ask. Looking back over the section he just read, have your child think of things his teacher could ask about the material. If he can’t think of any, he should read it again.
3. Write down those questions. Have him jot down each of his “imagined” questions on a separate index card and write its answer on the back of the card.
4. Proceed section by section. If one section is particularly long or tricky, or if he can imagine several questions about it on the test, suggest he break the section into smaller parts.
5. Identify new vocabulary words. After he’s made his “question cards” for the chapter, have him go back through the chapter and look for unfamiliar words. He can write each one on the front of an index card and its definition on the back. Once he has a chapter’s worth of information-packed cards, he should use them to study for the test. Better yet, you can use them to quiz him!

Source: www.parent-institute.com

Studies show that parental involvement in a child's education is one of the most important factors in raising student self-esteem and academic achievement. TCMS/TCUE provides many different opportunities for parental involvement.

Get INVOLVED ★

Pick up a volunteer application in our main office, print one from our school's webpage, or contact our Parent Involvement Coordinator.

Attendance is a predictor of future success

Your middle schooler is about halfway through the school year. How has his attendance been? Strong attendance is as important to your child’s school career as the foundation is to a house. Without it, there is nothing to build on. Need some more convincing on the importance of attendance in middle school? According to a recent study:

- ◆ Attendance and grades in middle school are the best indicators of how students will perform in high school.
- ◆ Students who are chronically absent in middle school are at high risk for being off-track in high school. These students are less likely to graduate on time and more likely to drop out of school altogether.
- ◆ Students who make even modest improvements to their attendance or grades in middle school significantly increase their chances of success in high school.

Source: E.M. Allensworth and others, Looking Forward to High School and College: Middle Grade Indicators of Readiness in Chicago

Drop off or send us your labels.



Three ways parent involvement benefits you and your family

Parent involvement at the middle-school level is just as important as it was in elementary school. Students' grades, test scores, attendance and behavior all tend to be better when parents are aware of what is going on at school. But your child is not the only one who benefits when you get involved. Here are three ways being involved also benefits you:



1. You know whom to contact if you have concerns. You know your child's teachers. You know the counselor and are familiar with the administrators.
2. You understand more about how the school works. Perhaps you are from an area where the school system is quite different from the one where you are currently living. Being involved helps you become familiar with the local education system.
3. The school and the teachers have a better understanding of you and your family. Perhaps English is not your first language. Perhaps you need support. The school may be able to direct you to community

“Coming together is a beginning;
keeping together is progress; working
together is success.” —Henry Ford

agencies and organizations who can help. If they know what is going on at home, they can better respond to your child at school.

Source: www.parent-institute.com

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Mrs. E. Holton
Yearbook Advisor
Thomas County Middle School

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Helpful Websites



www.khanacademy.org
www.quiz.com
www.adaptedmind.com
www.discoveryeducation.com

www.studyisland.com
www.typingweb.com
www.freerice.com
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IT MATTERS: DISCIPLINE



How should you respond to your child's back talk?

Even the child who gave you no trouble in elementary school may develop a "smart mouth" in middle school. At this stage in life, adolescents begin to question and challenge. As a parent, you bear the brunt of the sharp, dismissive and often disrespectful statements. To curb your child's back talk:

- Be a role model. Your middle schooler hears rude and mocking language everywhere. But she shouldn't hear it from you. Treat your child with respect, even when her behavior doesn't earn it.
- Point out your child's language. "That is disrespectful." "Your tone is not appropriate."
- Use consequences. Calmly tell your child how you feel about the way she speaks to you. State the consequences: "You are allowed to be angry with me. But you are not allowed to speak disrespectfully. If you continue to do so, you will lose TV privileges for a week."
- Acknowledge improvement. If you notice that your child is making an effort to cut the back talk, say so.
- Consider your child's intent. Sometimes, what seems like back talk is your child's attempt to show you that her opinion differs from yours. She is allowed to have a different opinion, but she needs to express it appropriately. Show her how by restating her point using a respectful tone.

Middle schoolers need parents to be role models, not friends

You are many things to your child, but a "friend" shouldn't be at the top of the list. That's because it's your job to shape him into a responsible adult by setting rules, boundaries and expectations for behaviors.

Suppose your child complains about his "horrible" teacher. A friend might join in: "You're right, she's awful!" But if you do that, you're undermining the teacher's authority and showing your child that it's OK to be disrespectful.


So approach the same scenario as his parent: "I'm sorry if you're having trouble with your teacher. I'm sure you will be able to work it out. But let me know if you need some help or advice." By responding this way, you're acknowledging your child's feelings. And you're also being his parent—not just his friend.

Source: www.parent-institute.com



"I'D LIKE YOU TO STAY HOME TONIGHT. THE WEATHER REPORT SAYS THERE'S A LARGE AREA OF PEER PRESSURE BLOWING IN FROM THE EAST!"

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