

Dear Parents of Middle School Students,

Below is a complete list of materials that will be required of every middle school student in the coming year. There are thorough instructions and guidelines on how these materials are expected to be employed by students and we strongly encourage every parent to read through them and so be able to help your student to transition well into the next grade.

Materials	English	History	Science	Math	Latin	Music	Art	Total
Composition Book	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Plastic Folder	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
1" Three-Ring Binder	x	x	1	x	x	x	x	1
Note Cards (100)	x	x	1	x	1	x	x	2
Protractor & Compass	x	x	x	1	x	x	x	1
Art Sketchbook	x	x	x	x	x	x	1	1
Accordion Folder	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	1

The above list of materials is intended to help prepare you and your students for the upcoming academic year in the 7th and 8th grade. In order to help every student achieve the highest possible academic performance, the faculty of the middle school compiled this list as a means of cultivating better organizational practices and study skills in our middle school students. The items on this list are *not* optional. They are required for every student at the behest of each individual teacher for the particular needs of their class.

The everyday function of the middle school varies greatly from the lower school. The level of freedom enjoyed by the students is much greater, as they are moving between classes with only minimal shepherding or oversight from teachers. They will enjoy the use of, and responsibility for, a locker in which they will store a portion of their school supplies and materials. Lastly, they will be taught, assessed, and graded by many teachers as opposed to one homeroom teacher. These unique facets of our upper school have created the need for a reliable method of organization that will help mitigate their chaotic effects.

Attempts to help organize students in the past have had mixed results and what we have learned is that the success of our attempt to organize students will hinge upon two things. First, a more specific and particularized system of implementation, which we believe we have achieved here by focusing solely on the middle school. And second, a commitment by students, parents, and teachers to following a few simple guidelines and steps of implementation. These guidelines are outlined here:

1. Notebooks are for notes and notes are for notebooks. Each class **requires one composition notebook** and notes should be taken for each class in its assigned notebook *only*. Students should *date their notes* each day so that they can refer back to specific days of class without any trouble. They should also use their notebook pages *in order*, from front to back, and not skip around or write notes out of chronological order. Asking teachers for “titles” or “headings” on each day of class lecture should also be done *every day* in order to make studying for tests and quizzes easier when the time comes. Finally, notes should *not be crammed* onto a page. Starting at the top of the page, working left to right, and leaving open lines between written lines in case there is a need to make addendums or corrections to something that had previously been said or written on the board.
2. Plastic folders or binders are for handouts, worksheets, reading packets, quizzes, tests, and any other class assignment. Whenever an assignment is given out or assigned in class by a teacher, the first action taken by a student should be to *write their name and date due* on the assignment or handout. Next, it should be stowed in the corresponding class’s folder/binder so it will not be lost or misplaced and can be accessed readily in study hall or in class when it is to be turned in. Whenever an assignment, test, quiz, worksheet, handout, or any other paper is graded and returned to a student it should be stored again in the plastic folder/binder in case it will be needed later in the course for studying or referencing back to. Keeping graded assignments and papers in one sleeve of the folder and new assignments and papers in the other sleeve is the best way to keep all of the assignments organized.
3. Accordion folder is for home storage. Once a quarter at least there will be a mandatory folder/binder and note check conducted by teachers of *every middle school student*. This check will be known to the students from day one of the semester and it will carry a grade with it. In this way, students who maintain good organization in their notes and class assignments will be rewarded for their diligence. After each folder/binder check, students should take their *old* assignments and papers from their folders/binders and store them neatly in their accordion folder at home. This will not only keep their folders/binders from becoming excessively heavy, but will also keep their binders/folders from breaking and keep them from losing assignments in the mass of papers that accumulate over the course of the semester. The accordion folder at home should be clearly labeled and have a section for *every class’s* notes so that they do not mix and become hopelessly confusing to students when they refer back to them.
4. Seventh and eighth grade Latin students will use an index card holder with lots of blank index cards in them. When they begin each new chapter, the students will fill up the index cards with the new vocabulary, grammar, sample sentences, etc. The cards will accumulate and be retained in the holder throughout the year and during subsequent years, so that most of their required Latin knowledge will all be in the same place.
5. In the upcoming school year, "Visual Journals" are going to be implemented in Middle School Art. These journals will be a physical place where students can collect their ideas, reference images, and notes. Visual Journals will be used for Art History note-taking, sketching ideas related to the unit, and planning compositions and color palettes for projects. They will also be a place for students to take on drawing prompts that. These journals will prepare students to think critically, problem solve, and use their time in an expressive, yet productive way.