



2020-2021 Velma Hamilton Middle

School Supplement to the
District Policy Guide

Hamilton Overview

Dear Families,

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to Hamilton Middle on behalf of the entire Hamilton staff and myself. Whether you have been a part of the Hamilton family for many years, or are new to us, we look forward to working with you. Hamilton Middle serves approximately 750 students in sixth through eighth grade. Our entire Hamilton staff is committed to challenging all students to reach academic excellence and social and emotional competencies. Hamilton is proud to offer a full-range of educational opportunities for our students across all traditional academic areas in addition to a broad array of unified arts, physical education, fine arts, and co-curricular activities.

At Hamilton Middle, we believe in the creativity and uniqueness of every member of our community, whether student, staff member, parent, or community partner. Combining this creativity and uniqueness with material supports results in a rich stream of resources that allows us to tailor educational programming to the individual needs of our students. We believe it is vital that the home/school link be strong so that your child will have every opportunity to be a successful learner. Clear communication between home and school is a necessary part of that link. This Policy Guide contains important information about programs and district and school policies. Of course, you may contact the Hamilton office with any questions that you may have at any time throughout the school year. We look forward to working with you and your child during the 2020-2021 school year. We hope that you will choose to be an active participant in the education of your child. Best wishes for a wonderful year!

Sincerely,

John Burkholder
Principal, Hamilton Middle

The Mission of Middle Schools

The middle school is designed for students who are making the transition from childhood to adolescence, from elementary school to high school. This period of transition is one of emotional stresses and strains and a wide variation among students in social, intellectual and physical development. As a transitional school, the middle school is designed to meet the unique growth and development needs and special interests of this age group.

The middle school should create a learning environment that provides stability, promotes self-confidence, self-worth, and is sensitive to the needs of each individual child.

The middle school should:

- continue to develop and reinforce basic skills throughout the curriculum;
- continue to develop basic learning strategies with an emphasis on problem solving and decision making skills, and have opportunities to apply them;
- expand the student's knowledge base in content/concepts in all curriculum areas; apply and extend independent learning skills unique to the student's development level;
- extend the student's ability to transfer skills and challenge their social, intellectual and motor strengths; and
- identify, explore and develop the student's interests and abilities.

Telephone

OFFICE: (608) 204-4620

FAX: (608) 204-0417

ATTENDANCE / SAFE ARRIVAL: (608) 204-4702

Address4801 Waukesha St
Madison, WI 53705**Web address**<https://hamilton.madison.k12.wi.us>facebook.com/MMSDHamilton**Important contact information**

Principal	John Burkholder	204-4620	jburkholder@madison.k12.wi.us
Asst. Principal	Mark Dax	204-4620	mrdax@madison.k12.wi.us
Financial & Principal's Secretary	Sandy Saether	204-4622	ssaether@madison.k12.wi.us
Student Records, Attendance & Registrar	Ada Davis	204-4636	aidavis@madison.k12.wi.us
Nurse	Jill Speer	204-4632	jcspeer@madison.k12.wi.us
Nurse Assistant	Diane Romary	204-4631	dromary@madison.k12.wi.us
Social Worker	Kristin Ensminger	204-4633	ksensminger@madison.k12.wi.us
Psychologist	Mary Menon	204-4634	mbmenon@madison.k12.wi.us
School Counselors	Boyd Snyder	204-4650	bsnyder@madison.k12.wi.us
	Madeline Schafer	204-4635	mschafer@madison.k12.wi.us
Positive Behavior Support Coach	TBA	204-4630	
Instructional Coach	Kathleen Doherty	204-4644	kdoherty@madison.k12.wi.us
Dean of Students	Jamie Domini	204-4689	jldomini@madison.k12.wi.us
LMC	Alex Phelps	204-4714	aphelps@madison.k12.wi.us

School CalendarPlease refer to the Hamilton website: <https://hamilton.madison.k12.wi.us/calendar>**School Hours**

Monday: 8:40 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

Tuesday – Friday: 8:40 a.m. – 3:52 p.m.

Key Policies and Guidelines

Anti-bullying

Schools must create a culture in which bullying is not tolerated. We encourage students to take part in this culture by reporting suspected bullying and being helpful to classmates who are bullied.

We must support and assist the person being bullied, giving them tools to empower themselves and overcome the negative effects of bullying, and we must also intervene with the student who engages in bullying behavior to ensure the bullying behavior stops by (1) teaching new skills of communication and empathy, (2) communicating with parents and (3) providing appropriate, gradual discipline. Students, parents or guardians, and other persons who become aware of suspected bullying incidents are encouraged to make a verbal or written report. Written reports may be made on the form entitled "Report of Bullying Incident" and submitted to any teacher, student services staff or administrator. This form can be found on the MMSD website, in the school office or in the Student Services Office.

Behavior

At Hamilton we follow the Behavior Education Plan, which can be found at www.mmsd.org/BEP. Our Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports Team along with staff and students have created a behavior matrix of school-wide expectations. Our three expectations include:

RESPECTING EVERYONE, EDUCATION and the ENVIRONMENT

There is a 91" x 45" banner of our behavior matrix, in a glass case, hanging in our main entry hallway for all to see, and smaller posters of the matrix in each classroom. We also take time at the beginning of each year to develop a social contract with all students. A consensus building process is used for students to determine our annual school-wide values and guidelines.

Child Care/After-school Information

Hamilton Middle School Recreation Program: Hamilton offers a wide variety of after-school clubs and activities. Most clubs begin in mid-September and meet once a week. Club offerings are given in the daily morning announcements and posted on the MSCR bulletin board. Clubs vary from year to year based on student interest and availability of leaders.

Most clubs are free and open to all students on a drop-in basis. Students who choose to participate in clubs must be in their club no later than 10 minutes after the dismissal bell.

Students who are not participating in clubs or working with a teacher must leave the building immediately after school. Students who are unsupervised after school will be asked to leave the building. Please coordinate with your child if you wish to pick them up after school. You may contact the MSCR office at Hamilton (204-4739) for further information.

Dress Code

Please refer to the District Policy Guide – Middle and High Schools, under the Behavior section.

Electronic devices

Students are not allowed to use cell phones, iPods, AirPods or other electronic devices/toys during the school day. We strongly suggest that these items remain at home. The school cannot be held liable for any damage or theft of these, or any, items. If your child must carry a cell phone, it should be locked in the student's locker

or on their person with the power off. They may use their cell phone before and after school ONLY. Our school policy is door to bell, meaning devices should be off and away before they enter the building and stay off until the final bell rings. If caught using these devices during the school day (which includes lunch recess) the device will be confiscated and placed in the main office. The first time a student's electronic device is confiscated the student may pick it up in the office after dismissal. Any and all additional occurrences require a parent/guardian come to school to retrieve it.

Family Engagement

Families can engage in a variety of ways at Hamilton. Families are encouraged to contact staff members directly, volunteer, or be part of our PTO.

Field Trips

Teachers frequently plan field trips and excursions to provide students with educational experiences, which are extensions of the classroom. These trips are essential to the educational program, and all students are expected to participate.

Parents/legal guardians will receive written notification in advance about field trips and should take care to sign all forms and send money to school if requested. Scholarship money is available if payment of field trip fees creates a hardship for a student's family. In such cases parents/legal guardians should contact their child's teacher or the school office.

Medications which are normally given to students during the school day will be given by school staff during field trips. No additional permission is required. If your child needs medication on an overnight or extended day field trip which is NOT regularly given at school, Board policy requires written parent permission and a written order from the health care practitioner. This includes over the counter, non-prescription medication. The medication permission forms are reviewed by the school nurse before the overnight or extended day field trip. Some medications (such as inhalers) may be self-administered but a school staff person will give most medications.

When riding a school bus as part of a field trip, students are expected to obey all rules governing school bus transportation.

Parent/teacher conferences

Parents/legal guardians receive formal reports on their children's progress four times during the school year in the form of quarterly progress reports and final quarter grades.

When parents are divorced or separated both parents/legal guardians have the right to receive information about their child's school progress, unless the court has ruled otherwise. Please stop at the school office to confirm if duplicate information is needed.

It is vital that parents/legal guardians and teachers be in communication with each other frequently so that the child understands that everyone is working together. If you have any questions about your child's progress or educational program, do not hesitate to call your child's teacher or the school principal.

Releasing children from school during the day

If your child is going to be absent or late, call 204-4702 (available 24 hours a day) and leave a message. Please give the child's first and last name (clearly and slowly spelling the last name), grade, reason for absence/tardy and the date. Please remember to speak slowly and clearly. In this way the office can let all teachers know on Infinite Campus that the student is absent. Students returning to school after any absence, tardiness, or appointment, MUST CHECK IN AT THE OFFICE and pick up a return-to-class slip.

Planned absences

All students who will be out of school on a planned vacation MUST complete a "Request for Pre-approval of a Planned Absence" form. These forms are available in the office or on the Hamilton website (<https://hamilton.madison.k12.wi.us>). A student may stop by to pick up a form to take home for completion and return it to school OR the parent may stop by the office to complete the form. When the form has been completed, the student

will show a copy to each teacher. The teacher and the student will then make the decision regarding how and when the work missed by the student during the absence will be completed. The specifics of the work to be completed should be noted in the student's planner.

It is expected that all parents will keep these requests to an absolute minimum to avoid the loss of instructional time.

Tardy Policy:

Students reporting late to school at any time of day report to the office and obtain a pass.

Tardy Repercussions:

- Tardies 1-3: Reminding or redirecting language by the teacher
- 4th tardy: Phone call home by teacher, Full Problem-Solving Conference and/or Fix-It (at lunch or after school) with the teacher that recorded the tardies (minimum of two-week intervention)
- Subsequent tardies after minimum of two-week intervention(s): Phone call home by referring teacher, contact student's School Counselor (Maddie Schaefer or Boyd Snyder and School Social Worker - Kristin Ensminger) for follow-up (i.e. Restorative Circle involving family if tardies are 1st hour and/or possible Check In Check Out intervention)
- Subsequent tardies: Will result in administrative action.

Students get a fresh start each quarter.

Releasing children from school during the day

Please make sure you give your student a note to bring to the office BEFORE school to get a pass for an appointment occurring during the school day. The note should include the type of appointment and the time the student will be picked up in the office. The student will receive a pass with the time of their pick up and will meet the parent in the office at the appointed time. Due to safety concerns, students will not be allowed to wait in the Breezeway or leave the school without the parent coming to the main office to sign out the student. Students should bring the pass back to the office upon their return to school. The time of their return will be noted on the pass and the student will use this pass to re-enter class.

Safety & Security

Families play a key role in school safety. At hamilton.mmsd.org/safety, you can read about school-specific resources for helping keep students safe. You'll find more information on district safety and security, including how we communicate with you in an emergency, at mmsd.org/safety.

Emergency Notification

In the event that an emergency situation (evacuation, lockdown), occurs at school, parents/legal guardians will be notified via the District's telephone SchoolMessenger system. The District will send a telephone message or email with information regarding the situation to the student's emergency contact designees. Additional information and updates will also be available on the school's website, as well as on the MMSD webpage (www.mmsd.org).

Fire Drills

A fire evacuation plan is posted for each room. Students should become familiar with it and listen to additional instructions given by the teacher. When the fire alarm sounds, students should stand and walk from the room in an orderly fashion. Move quickly, but do not run. The first students to reach an outside door are to hold it open until all have left the building. Upon leaving the building, move at least one hundred feet away from it. A teacher will lead the group the desired distance. Stay in that area as quietly as possible until the signal bell sounds for students to re-enter. One fire drill a month is required per state statute.

Tornado Drills

Before a drill is held, the teacher will notify the class's designated area of safety. When a drill is held, follow these procedures.

1. Go to your designated area in an orderly fashion.
2. Absolutely no talking is allowed during the drill.
3. Leave books and supplies in your room; do not take them with you.
4. An announcement/short bell will signal the end of the drill.

Safety Plans

Every classroom in all of our schools has an Emergency Procedures pamphlet which provides directions on responding to a variety of emergencies that may be encountered at the school.

Evacuation Site

If we are required to evacuate our building because of an emergency (fire, bomb threat, etc.), we will walk to Covenant Presbyterian Church on the corner of Segoe and Mineral Point Roads. (Telephone 233-6297).

School breakfast / lunch

Breakfast Program

All schools in the Madison Metropolitan School District offer breakfast daily. Breakfast is served 15-20 minutes prior to the start of the school day. A school breakfast generally consists of milk, fresh fruit or 100% fruit juice, and an entrée that includes grains and/or a protein source.

Lunch Program

Lunch is available daily at all Madison schools. Lunches consist of milk, an entrée containing protein and whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Our Nutrition Team is constantly searching for different and healthy choices to offer our students. We are committed to offering meals that are both great tasting and nutritious. Families may qualify for free lunch as determined by their financial situation.

Families may qualify for free breakfast and lunch as determined by their financial situation. For more information, please see the section on Free & Reduced Meals in the District Policy Guide, or visit the district website. Please note: USDA regulations require that we serve a complete meal. Individual items, such as milk, cannot be provided free to supplement a meal from home.

Student Personal Property

Every article found should be taken to the Lost & Found Lockers. These lockers are located between the Copy Room (room 157) and the Student Services office (room 159). Those who have lost articles should look for them there. Textbooks will be returned to the homeroom or course teacher. For lost items of considerable value, or small in size, please check with the office to see if it was turned in there. If not, please complete a Report of Loss Form in the office.

Student support services

Members of the Student Services Team at VHMS assist students, parents, and staff in a variety of ways. Promotion of good mental health as well as academic excellence are the goals of this team. Two full-time guidance counselors, a full-time school social worker, a part-time school psychologist, a half-time PBS Coach, a school nurse, and a nurse's assistant are available.

Assistant Principal

The Assistant Principal assumes major responsibility for the coordination and supervision of a Progressive Discipline Program. In addition, they conduct conferences with students on conflict resolution among peers and staff and functions as liaison with staff and parents regarding student affairs.

Counselors

Each student at Hamilton Middle School has a counselor. A counselor can help you learn more about yourself and others, and can help you adjust to school. If you have concerns about school work, friends or your schedule, you are invited to stop in the counseling office and talk to your counselor.

Health Services

Hamilton has a nurse and nurse's assistant on staff who are available to perform a number of health-related services including: administration of medication during the school day, hearing and vision screening, reviewing immunization records and caring for sick or injured students.

If a student feels ill during class time, they should get a pass slip from the teacher to go to the health office. The nurse and assistant keep a record of all student contacts. If a student becomes ill when the nurse or assistant is not in, report to the main office.

Other health care services that are coordinated by the school nurse include: medication and procedure management, health counseling and health screening services. The nurse assists children and families to access medical resources, participates in the special education evaluation process and is a resource for students, families and teachers/school staff regarding individual student health concerns. The nurse is available as an educational resource for health and medical topics.

The nurse meets regularly with our Student Services Support Team. You may reach our nursing staff by calling the school's health office number: 204-4631 or 204-4632.

Psychology

Psychologists provide individual and group support to help students solve problems, support for students concerned about grades or other issues, assistance when a crisis occurs at school or home, mental health assistance referrals and information about educational programs to meet the educational needs of students.

The school psychologist is available to meet with students, parents and staff on any issue related to school, family and/or community functions. In addition, the psychologist can be involved in making diagnostic decisions concerning students with learning and/or behavioral difficulties.

Social Work

Social workers help students, friends and families in crisis or in conflict, provide guidance in family/friend relationships, family change, sexual orientation, depression, self-esteem, gender issues and trauma, help students learn about protective behaviors, alcohol and drugs, keep track of student attendance concerns, families who are homeless, and provide guidance and referrals to outside agencies.

The social worker is available to meet with students 1:1 or in small groups, families, school staff and community agencies and meets regularly with the Student Services Support Team.

Positive Behavior Support Coach

The Positive Behavior Coach coordinates all aspects of the school-wide Positive Behavior Support program. This includes coordinating and leading the work of the PBIS teams, tracking and sharing behavioral data, developing lessons for staff that teach and reinforce positive behavior and helping the Student Services Team design support systems for students not meeting the universal expectations.

Traffic Safety

Families should avoid dropping off or picking up on Waukesha Street, in front of the school as this is the bus pick up/drop off area. Families also should not turn into the parking lots to pick up or drop off as these are spaces in which students congregate prior to school starting. The parking lots are also reserved for staff and individuals in need of handicap accessibility.

Transportation

Transportation is provided by Badger Bus through yellow bus routes with stops that are placed at centrally located intersections within an acceptable walk distance by students. Riding the bus is a privilege that requires respectful behavior at all times. Specific times and routes can be found at: <https://transportation.madison.k12.wi.us/bus-routes>. Generally, students who live more than 1.5 miles from the school and within the school's attendance area meet the criteria and are eligible to ride.

Supervision

The building and grounds are supervised by school personnel fifteen minutes before classes begin in the morning and during the day when students are participating in scheduled school activities until school is officially dismissed. School personnel do not supervise playgrounds after classes are dismissed in the afternoon.

In accordance with Board of Education policy, the following shall not be allowed on school grounds:

1. Hardball or tackle football
2. Throwing of stones, snowballs or other missiles
3. Tripping, shoving, unwanted touching, fighting or other disturbances

4. Thoughtless running or chasing through other activity areas
5. Climbing on fences, buildings, ledges, fire escapes, downspouts, swinging gates, etc.
6. Making snow or ice slides on walks
7. All powered vehicles, including go-karts, powered bikes, mini-bikes, motorcycles, snowmobiles, etc.
8. Dogs or other pets.

Find more information in the district policy guide, found at www.mmsd.org/policy-guide.