

RAMAPO RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS **& GENERAL INFORMATION**

DAILY SCHEDULE/TRANSPORTATION

What are the hours of the school day?

Homeroom begins at 8:00AM. Students who arrive to homeroom past 8:00 AM are considered late to school. Dismissal is at 2:40 PM. Buses are loaded and depart shortly afterward.

Where do students wait before homeroom?

Students are permitted to enter school beginning at 7:30 AM. The student entrance is next to our digital message sign. Students report to the gymnasium where they are supervised until homeroom. Students are dismissed from the gymnasium at 7:50 AM to go to their lockers and report to homeroom.

What are the procedures for drop-off and pick-up?

Student Drop-Off

The area for parents/guardians to drop their child off is in the circular driveway in front of the school building. For safety reasons, as well as to expedite the drop off for as many vehicles as possible, drivers should pull forward as far as possible in the circular driveway.

The student drop-off begins in front of the Main Entrance and extends all the way until after the cafeteria. Vehicles dropping off students should remain in a single file.

The single file drop-off is able to accommodate approximately fifteen vehicles simultaneously.

After dropping off, drivers should not back-up or go in reverse. We request drivers to be patient and wait for the vehicle in front of them to complete their respective drop-off prior to proceeding to Ridge Road.

No Left Turn: There is no left turn onto Ridge Road following student drop-off. Drivers must make a right turn onto Ridge Road.

Important: Children should never be dropped off on Ridge Road OR in our parking lot during the morning drop-off. The parking lot is reserved for buses to drop-off our students.

Student Pick-up / Dismissal

The area for parents/guardians to pick up their child at the end of the day is in the parking lot or on the school side of Ridge Road.

Students should not be picked up in the circular driveway at dismissal.

The circular driveway is reserved for buses at dismissal.

Parents/Guardians should refrain from using the Lenape Meadows' parking lot as a pick-up location for Ramapo Ridge students.

Important: Students who ride a bus at the end of the day should go to their locker and proceed to the cafeteria in a timely manner to wait until their bus number is called.

Who do I contact regarding transportation?

School bus pick-up and drop-off times, as well as bus stop locations, are listed in the Realtime Parent Portal under the "Transportation" tab found on the left side menu.

Parents/Guardians should access and review this information so that your child knows what time to be at the bus stop.

Transportation questions and concerns should be directed to Joan Schettino, Transportation Coordinator, at jschettino@mahwah.k12.nj.us or 201-762-2407.

ABSENCES, LATE ARRIVALS, & EARLY DISMISSALS

How do I report an absence?

Please contact the main office 201-762-2380 and Press 2 for Attendance by 8:00 AM on the day of the absence if your child will not be attending school. Leave your name and the reason your child is absent. Attendance letters are sent home for students who accrue excessive absences and parents/guardians are required to meet with the Principal. Disciplinary action is taken for excessive unexcused absences. Please send in a note explaining the absence when your child returns to school and submit them to the Main Office or via email to Beth Pollock at bpollock@mahwah.k12.nj.us.

Where do students sign-in if they are late?

Students must sign in at the Guidance Office window. Students entering the building after 8 AM must use the Main Entrance. They will be issued a pass to report to class. If a child accrue an excessive number of late arrivals to school, tardy letters are sent home and parents/guardians are required to meet with the Principal. Disciplinary action is taken for excessive tardiness. Students signing in after 8:25 AM must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. We pride ourselves on our students being on-time. Although Ridge Road's morning gridlock traffic may lead one to predict otherwise, the majority of our students are in the school well before 8 AM!

What if my child needs to leave school early?

A student must bring a written request from a parent/guardian to the office the morning of their early dismissal. Parents/Guardians must include a phone number at which to contact

them. The office will issue the student an early dismissal pass. Parents/Guardians must report to the Main Entrance and sign their child out at the Guidance Office window.

If a child returns to school on the same day, the child must report to the Guidance Office window and sign back in upon his/her return. Parents/Guardians must accompany their child when he/she returns to school.

ABSENTEEISM

Please try to limit the number of absences your child has from school. Individual days here or there add up.

In addition to supporting student learning, student attendance supports our school's rank/grade! Schools in NJ are ranked/graded on a category referred to as "Chronic Absenteeism." *Chronic Absenteeism* is defined by the state as not being present for 10% or more of possible school days. The state exempts some absences from the *Chronic Absenteeism* threshold such as a religious holiday, *Take your Child to Work Day*, participation in observance of Veterans Day or district board of election membership activities, and the closure of a busing district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school. Absences resulting from out-of-school suspension, field trips, and approved Home Instruction do not count towards the threshold.

Please prioritize school attendance. School attendance is truly a home-school partnership. Thank you for your continued support.

MAKE-UP WORK

How is missed class assignments and/or homework handled at RRMS?

Each student is required to complete missed work and assignments. It is good practice for students to obtain class notes from a classmate. The number of days to complete assignments is equal to the number of days absent.

Quizzes and tests are made up as soon as possible at the discretion of the teacher and possibly after school hours. Teachers post assignments on Google Classroom, class-specific websites, or the calendar page of the Real Time Parent Portal.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS OR MATERIALS

What if my child forgets something at home?

Please help to make sure your child is prepared for each school day and has all necessary items with them.

Our goal is to work together with parents/guardians to decrease the number of parent/guardian drop-offs for forgotten items or materials.

Help your child to become more independent as he/she assumes this daily responsibility for him/herself.

However, we appreciate and recognize that – even given reminders – there will be times when your child will forget something. Such times are opportunities for your child to learn responsibility and natural consequences.

To enhance the security of our school, we respectfully request that parents/guardians limit dropping off forgotten items or materials to school such as lunch, lunch money, homework, Physical Education clothes, musical instruments, books, etc.

Parents/Guardians are asked to remain mindful that accepting parent/guardian “deliveries” throughout the school day causes unnecessary traffic on our campus and at our secure entrances.

LUNCH PROGRAM

What is the lunch program?

Ramapo Ridge Middle School offers a traditional hot lunch with prepared entrees and pizza, also a cold lunch area with sandwiches, wraps and salads. There is also a separate snack bar line with bagels, pretzels, chips, juices, milk and other snacks. Each item is priced separately. Students have a choice of entering either line, or bringing their own cold lunch. Free and reduced lunches are offered to families who qualify.

Families can deposit funds that go directly onto their child’s school ID card. This can be accomplished via sending a check to school or electronically. We highly encourage families to take advantage of this option as the card system makes it very easy for students to navigate our lunch lines. Signing up for the card option also allows parents/guardians to monitor what their child is purchasing by viewing their account on-line. Please see the letter and link on our school webpage.

What is the cost of a student lunch?

Lunch costs \$3.00 (2019-2020). Snack bar items are priced individually with items ranging from .80 to \$2.10 (2019-2020). Unlike elementary schools, teachers do not collect lunch money by the day or week. Each student pays daily while in the line with cash or through funds that you have deposited on your child’s ID card. The fastest way to get through the lunch line is by using funds that are deposited on the ID card. Please visit our website and find the related PaySchools Central information under *Daily Announcements*.

Can you charge for food if you forget money or your lunch card runs out?

Yes, the system allows you to have a minimal negative balance. However, payment is expected the next school day.

Free and Reduced Lunch Applications

Information regarding the district’s free and reduced lunch program is located on the district and school website – under the Departments tab, select Food Service.

Direct link <https://www.mahwah.k12.nj.us/Page/1267>. If applicable, please apply for free and reduced lunch via the food services webpage link.

Applications are available at the office and must be filled out EACH YEAR. Applications must be submitted by October 1st of the given school year. Free and reduced students can also use ID cards that will indicate such.

COMMUNICATION

Real Time Parent and Student Portal

At Ramapo Ridge and Mahwah High School, you have instant access to how your child is performing in school through the Real Time Parent Portal. The students also have a student portal. By going to the portal, parents and students can instantly see grades, report cards, progress reports, upcoming events, messages, documents, etc. This system is an excellent way for both parents and students to keep in abreast of their child's progress.

Website

Please check our webpage regularly for updated information and upcoming events.

One Call Now

The "One Call Now" system is used to communicate school closings and other important information. Look for our weekly blast to the RRMS school community on Wednesdays about reminders, events, and celebrations.

Email

We also e-mail parents to communicate important dates and information. Be sure that you complete the emergency contacts in September with updated phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

How is information communicated to students?

The school day begins and ends with announcements. Items such as team or club sign ups, coming events, sports scores and other pertinent information are announced. Students must listen to morning announcements and remain responsible for obtaining important information about our opportunities and their activities.

Do students ever take home handouts?

Many forms for extra-curricular activities or specific sign-ups sheets/permission forms are available in the Main Office for students or parents/guardians. Many of our handouts are sent through the "One Call Now" system and/or are posted on our school webpage.

What if I have an academic question or concern?

Contact the teacher and the sixth grade counselor by phone and/or e-mail. In most cases the teacher or counselor will return your call or e-mail the same day and certainly within 24 hours. If your academic concern is not resolved, you should contact the Department Supervisor. Team Leaders could be a good resource for parents if the academic concern is across multiple content areas.

Can I request a meeting with all of my child's teachers as a group?

Yes. Meeting requests should be scheduled through the School Counselor and the Team Leader.

Does RRMS have parent/teacher conferences?

Parent/Teacher conferences are not held at RRMS. Team meetings are scheduled as needed throughout the school year. Parents and students may meet with all team teachers as a group or they may request to meet with a specific teacher. It is generally a good practice to meet with the entire team, in order to get a complete picture of a student's progress.

*When in doubt, contact your child's School Counselor. He/She will provide assistance and/or direct you where to go.

SCHOOL COUNSELING & TEAMS

School Counselors

Ramapo Ridge Middle School has grade-level school counselors. Middle school counselors often provide a first response to many student and parent/guardian needs. In addition to daily student needs, scheduling and class assignments, school counselors help students with decision-making, peer support, study skills, conflict resolution, peer mediation, and facilitating support groups when needed. Grade-level school counselors also assist in the transitioning of students from school to school. Your child's counselor will remain the same for all three years at Ramapo Ridge. In addition to grade-level school counselors, the Ridge has a Student Services Counselor. The Student Services Counselor supports struggling students across all three grade levels and collaborates with students' grade-level school counselor.

Teams

Each student is assigned to Ramapo or Ridge Team. A team of teachers is responsible for the planning and instruction of the core subjects (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Reading in sixth grade or World Language in seventh and eighth grade). Ramapo Ridge Middle School believes strongly in this collaborative, interdisciplinary team approach of teaching. Teaming enables students, teachers, and parents to come together as a unique community, learning each other's strengths and needs. This relationship is a key element in middle level philosophy, where we strive to teach the whole child. Working together in collaborative environments also enables teachers to share information that may be vital for the success of our students.

How are team assignments determined?

Each team will reflect a wide range of ability levels as well as the social-emotional development needs of our total student population. Every attempt is made to balance teams by gender, academic performance, course requirements and behavior. The needs of the individual must blend with the collective needs of all students to create groupings that will provide the best education for all students. The team and student schedule is distributed before the start of the new school year. Once assigned to a team, students will remain within this small learning community for three years.

Heterogeneous Grouping

A heterogeneous class consists of students with mixed abilities in order to have richer learning experiences. This is the philosophy of team placements. Differentiated instruction is a key goal in all classrooms at RRMS. The only classes that are homogeneously grouped (similar ability level) are our math sections.

DRESS CODE, CELLPHONES, LOCKERS

Dress Code

What is the dress code at RRMS?

The basic responsibility of the proper dress of students lies with the student and his/her parent/guardian. Students are expected to wear clothing which is neat and clean, is consistent with standards of health and safety, and does not disrupt learning in the classroom. Supervision of the dress code shall be the responsibility of the administration and staff in cooperation with the parents. The dress code can be read in our Parent-Student

Handbook which is posted on our school webpage. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to review the handbook prior to September.

Cellphones

Students are not permitted to use cellphones at school during the school day.

Cellphones must be turned off and secured in lockers.

Students are not permitted to have their cellphone on their person during the school day.

Video and/or photography is prohibited during the school day.

Please do not call or text your child during the school day.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a locker with a combination. It is the students' responsibility not to share their combination with anyone, in order to protect their property.

Assigned lockers are school property.

Students should not allow another student to store anything in their locker.

Each student is responsible for the contents of his/her locker.

School officials reserve the right to inspect lockers.

All backpacks, hats, cell phones, etc., and outerwear are to be stored in lockers. Students are not permitted to use backpacks during the school day.

Maintaining a safe school is a collective effort. Only school-appropriate materials should be in students' lockers.

Visits to lockers, between classes, is permitted to gather books and materials.

The first year of locker use can be challenging. Teachers often provide 6th grade students extra time in the beginning of the school year to learn how to use their locker/lock.

Physical Education classes have separate lockers in the gym to store PE clothes.

HOMEWORK, LABS, & HONOR ROLL

What is the homework policy?

Each department has its own procedure about assignments that are incomplete or missing. If assignments are late, a reduction in grade is likely to occur, increasing with each missing day. If a student excessively misses assignments, parents will be notified.

RRMS believes in the value of homework to increase learning, provide practice of skills taught in school, increase parental knowledge of classroom activities, and develop a student's organizational skills and responsibility. Parents/Guardians are asked to provide quiet places for study, scheduled time to complete homework and to review homework assignments. Remember that the Real Time Portal is a great place to keep up on homework.

Typical Homework Expectations

6th Grade

Math: usually no more than 15-20 minutes most nights

Science: 2-3 times per week; 10-15 minutes

Reading: 10-15 minutes of reading for a reading log; written homework is not frequently assigned and, when it is, students usually begin it in class; approx. 15 minutes.

Language Arts: usually 2 times per week in both Language Arts and Lit. Support; 10-20 minutes

Social Studies: usually 2 times per week; 20-30 minutes.

Encore Team: does not assign homework

Total: Avg. 45-60 minutes

Lab Intervention Classes

Students may be identified for “Lab” intervention classes in lieu of cycle classes. These classes are referred to as Math Lab and Literacy Lab. Students may be scheduled into one, two or three “Lab” classes based on identified need.

If your child is identified for one or both of our “Lab” classes, your school counselor will review the information with you.

Honor Roll

Report Cards are issued quarterly. A midterm progress report is sent home to give you and your child an idea of how he/she is progressing. Honor Roll criteria is grades of 80 and above and a conduct grade of S in all classes. High Honor Roll criteria is grades of 90 and above and a conduct grade of S in all classes.

EXPLORATION CLASSES/PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

When is PE and Health offered?

Physical Education is offered to all students for a total of three quarters of the year. One quarter of the year, the students are in health class. All students are required to change for class (shorts or sweatpants, T-shirt, sneakers) or other acceptable clothing for outdoor units. Participation is the main goal with emphasis on cooperation, attitude and skill development. A wide variety of activities are offered including team sports such as soccer, football, team handball, basketball and volleyball. Also offered are track & field events and core fitness training in our *Athletic Performance Enhancement Center*. A variety of team building activities are completed throughout the school year. Our health curriculum in the sixth grade outlines mental health, drugs and alcohol, social health, reproduction and nutrition.

What are exploration cycle classes?

In the middle school, specials are referred to as exploration cycle classes. Each cycle class is offered for the duration of approximately 36 consecutive days. After 36 days, the students switch to the next cycle class, exposing them to five different classes throughout the year. In the sixth grade, students take two cycles of World Language (French and Spanish), Art, *Dress Code* (soft circuits, electronics, crafts), and *Image, Sound, & Story* (media, film, storytelling).

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (Current 2018-2019)

A description of our clubs can be found on the school webpage as well.

Community Service Club	Fit Club
Homework Club	Theater
Yearbook	Stage Crew
Student Council	National History Day
Pride Band	Math Counts Club
Spirit Band	National Jr. Honor Society
Jazz Band	French Honor Society
String Orchestra	Spanish Honor Society
Chorus	Journalism
FORR (Friends of Ramapo Ridge) Club	

What is the Student Council?

Organization begins in September with weekly meetings throughout the school year. The goal is to give students an active role in decisions that affect RRMS. Activities include designing school spirit days, fundraising for special causes, engaging in service projects, hosting dances, offering movie nights, and much, much more. Each homeroom has two student council representatives.

HEALTH OFFICE

What medical information do I need to know?

Medication forms need to be renewed for each school year. The medication forms can be found on the Mahwah Board of Ed webpage under “Departments” and then “Health Services.”

Please review all related policies and forms.

Any medication that a child takes during the school day, whether prescription or over the counter, must be stored in the health office. The one exception is if the prescribing doctor has authorized your child to self-administer an inhaler or Epi Pen; this information must be documented with, reviewed, and approved by our school nurse. All 6th grade students must have documentation of having received the Tdap and Meningococcal vaccines.

Yellow emergency cards must be on file for each student. These cards are necessary for us to maintain the most up to date information, so that we are able to reach you or your designated alternate, in case of a medical emergency. Physicals are recommended for each developmental level in your child's life, so as your child enters Ramapo Ridge the school would recommend that you have a current physical on file in the health office. Please see the "Health Services" section on the Mahwah Board of Ed webpage for the related form.