

Pilot School News

September 13, 2024 | Volume #1



UPCOMING EVENTS >>>

September 19, 2024

Title 1 Annual Meeting
Open House/Parent Curriculum Night
6:00pm – 8:00pm

September 25, 2024

Picture Day

October 3, 2024

No School for Students – Professional Day

October 7, 2024

Murray PACT Meeting
5:00pm – 6:30pm

October 8, 2024

Murray PTO Meeting
6:00pm – 7:15pm

October 15, 2024

Family/Teacher Conferences
4:00pm – 7:00pm

October 17-18, 2024

No School – State-wide Teacher Meetings

October 30, 2024

Picture Retakes

Community is much more than belonging to something; it's about doing something together that makes belonging matter. Author Unknown.

We are off to a great start and are excited for what's to come! There are many examples of us doing things together to support our young Pilots and show them that belonging to Murray matters. Our WEB students did a fabulous job onboarding our 6th graders and getting them excited about their new school. Our staff first prioritized relationships and community building to emphasize the importance of community in the classroom. Our families helped to organize their students and give them the love and encouragement to succeed. These are just a few of the many examples of how we are all doing things that really matter and that show us why "belonging" together matters.

We have our first Core Value assembly today as part of our character development at Murray. Our National Junior Honor Society students have been working hard preparing to engage and educate our students around our first core value of Dignity. It is amazing working with our students and seeing them flourish in leadership positions!

Important Reminder of Upcoming Event - Annual Title 1 Open House and Curriculum Evening

Date - Thursday, September 19

Time - 6PM-8PM

Family Experience - Families will follow a very compressed class schedule with their student, get to meet teachers, learn about the exciting things happening in classes and students will possibly win some great prizes at the end of the night! We hope to see you at this event as it is fun, fast paced and a wonderful opportunity to get a small introduction into the great things that are happening in our classes this year!

The schedule for the evening is as follows -

5:45pm – Greet Families – Distribute Schedules and distribute one raffle ticket to each student

6:10 – 6:25 PM – Period 1 (Everyone will be shown a brief presentation on Title 1 funding and resources)

6:28 – 6:38 PM – Period 2

6:41 – 6:51 PM – Period 3

6:54 – 7:04 PM – Period 4

7:07 – 7:17 PM – Period 5

7:20 – 7:30 PM – Period 6

7:33 – 7:43 PM - Period 7

7:43 - 8:00 PM – Raffle to win amazing prizes! Families exit and event is concluded.

Tips for Families -

With the recent safety events in Saint Paul, I want to take this opportunity to provide families with some helpful resources from SPPS when processing with our young Pilots.

Please note - Our safety drill that was originally scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 12 has been rescheduled for Tuesday Sept. 17 at 9:10AM. Please refer to my family communication on the details of the Lockdown DRILL process.

1. Examples of how to facilitate students' feelings/concerns/questions:

- What are some things we could do or say to support each other?
- Who is someone you can trust to talk to if you are worried?
- Do you have any questions?
- What do you think we could do to help each other, especially those that are scared?
- What might make things worse for our school community? (gossip)

Murray Middle School

2200 Buford Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55108
murray.spps.org
651-293-8740

School Hours: 8:30am – 3:00pm

Murray Administration

Jamin McKenzie, Principal
Michelle Bierman, Assistant Principal
Richard Terrell, Assistant Principal

Murray Office Staff

Maria Telles
Adriana Cruz-Trevino

Murray Counselors

Justine Revermann (A-L)
Stephanie Lee(M-Z)

Murray School Nurse

Vanessa Novak

Murray Parent Liaison

Stefanie Folkema

Murray Attendance

murrayattendance@spps.org

2. Additional Tips

- “There is never a “right” way for a child or adult to feel;” Express that each person responds to scary events or trauma in different ways. Recognize the personal nature of traumatic events.
- Emphasize with each student that we see them, hear them, value them and love them
- Reassure students that we’re here to listen and support.
- You can model what you do when you’re feeling sad or afraid. “I try to think of a person that makes me feel safe.” “Is there anything that has worked for you in the past?”
- National PTA: discussing difficult topics with your children:
<https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/health/Emotional-Health/Discussing-Difficult-Situations-With-Your-Children>

Celebrations:

#Pilotprops of the week! Ms. Williams would like to celebrate Hank (Henry) Thomford. Henry gets Props for showing up the first week as a Murray ROCK STAR! Helping out in the classrooms and being a leader in our community. Way to Go!

#Pilotprops of the week! Mr. Lee would like to celebrate Michael Rucker! Michael has demonstrated outstanding leadership in our community this week. He has consistently volunteered at every opportunity and takes great pleasure in sharing his knowledge with the class. Go Pilots!

#Pilotprops of the week! Ms. Crowley would like to celebrate Noelia Gonzalez. Noelia has demonstrated outstanding leadership in our community this week. I have witnessed her leading by example, offering other students help, and consistently doing her best. I am so happy to welcome her to Murray!

Your Co-Pilot,

Jamin McKenzie
Principal, Murray Middle School



Staff Spotlight



*One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world. **Malala Yousafzai***

Hello, my name is Jamin McKenzie and I am the proud principal here at Murray Middle School. Welcome to a new school year, Pilots! I am in this business because I love working with kids. Seeing all of those smiles and all of that excitement as students and staff are walking in to start a new school year is something I look forward to every fall. With a new school year comes all of the unknowns, the new discoveries, the numerous challenges, the endless questions and the new relationships. These are all of the things that make working in education the best job in the world!

I am entering my 23rd year in Saint Paul Public Schools and my 12th year at Murray. I began my career as a science teacher at Battle Creek Middle School and still have a love of everything astronomy. My family consists of my wonderful wife Lisa and our twin children Jadon and Isabelle, who are 17 years old and entering 12th grade. Our family enjoys time at the family cabin, golfing together and supporting our kids in their sporting events.

I am excited to begin a new school year as I continue to serve our Murray community. As a staff, we are very fortunate to have such a dedicated community and to be educating your young scholars. We thank you for this opportunity and we look forward to another great year!

Welcome to all and ...Go Pilots!

Staff Spotlight



Hello, my name is Michelle Bierman. I am excited to be at Murray Middle School as an Assistant Principal. I am excited to have our students and families back at school for the 24-25 school year!

I am a proud Saint Paul resident and have been part of Saint Paul Schools for over 27 years. I started as a high school teacher at Highland Park Senior High School where I taught History of Americas, Civics, Asian Studies, African American History, and Economics. I continued my work supporting social studies teachers at the district level, working in the teaching and learning department, and then racial equity and gender equity. Most recently, I was the Assistant Principal at Open World Learning (OWL).

I graduated from Minnesota State University with a BS in Social Studies, University of St. Thomas with my Masters of Teaching, and University of Minnesota with my Administrator's license. When I am not at school, my wife and I spend time with our nieces and nephews, dogs, and ride around town on our scooters. Think Vespa. I like to travel, read, kayak, and teach. I teach as an adjunct professor at Metropolitan State University in their Urban Education Program.

My belief is that each student has many talents and gifts. We, as adults, just need to get to know students, provide opportunities for them to be themselves, challenge each student academically, and add some fun into the mix to bring out the best in each student.

I am proud to be a co-pilot at Murray! Please stop by and say hello. I look forward to meeting our new families and students and welcoming back our current students and families.

Staff Spotlight



Hello, Murray Middle School Community!

I am Richard Terrell and I am excited about serving as Murray Middle School Assistant Principal. This is my second year with this amazing community. I extend a warm welcome to our new students and families, and a heartfelt welcome back to those returning to the Murray community.

I am entering my 12th year in education. My journey began with Saint Paul Public Schools, where I supported Battle Creek Middle School and Parkway Montessori Middle School as an Intervention Specialist. Over the past five years, I have held various roles, including Teacher of Special Assignment/Equity Coach at Eastern Carver County Schools, Executive Director and School Principal at Loveworks Academy, and Assistant Principal at Best Academy.

My passion lies in ensuring that every student has the resources and support they need to succeed, coaching teachers to achieve high academic standards, and partnering with community members and organizations.

Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with my three wonderful children; Zyree (11th grade), Raymond (1st grade), and Vivian (PreK). We love watching movies, playing video games, following college sports, golfing, and traveling.

I am looking forward to a fantastic year with the Murray community.

Let's go, Murray Pilots!



Athletics

Fall sports: Flag Football, Soccer & Volleyball!

Practice: Monday – Thursday
3:15 – 4:45

Games are Mondays & Wednesdays

Please register on RSchool
[rSchool Today registration form link](#)

Attendance

Student absences/tardies may be emailed or phoned into the attendance line:

murrayattendance@spps.org
651-744-5223

Please state the student's name, grade, date and the reason for the absence/tardy.

Email or call each day the student is absent. If a phone call is made by a parent or legal guardian, then no written note is required as follow-up. You may also send a note with your child to bring to the office explaining their absence if you are not able to call.

If your child needs to leave early for an appointment, send a note with your child to bring to the office that morning. They will then receive a pass to leave and be able to meet you in the office at the appointed time. A parent or legal guardian must come in to the office to sign the student out.

Please remember if your child will be out for an extended period of time due to a family event, have your child come to the office for an 'application for special leave'.

Thank you,

Adriana Cruz-Trevino
Attendance Clerk

Open House

Please join us on Thursday, September 19th from 6:00pm-8:00pm for our Title 1 sponsored curriculum review and Murray Open House Event. You will follow your child's schedule where you will have an opportunity to meet the teachers, receive a syllabus and hear a brief introduction to each class. The hard start for this event is 6:00pm if you wish to follow your student's schedule. All are welcome if you cannot make it at the scheduled start time. We will use the following schedule:

5:45pm – Greet Families – Distribute Schedules

6:10pm – 6:25pm – Period 1
6:28pm – 6:38pm – Period 2
6:41pm – 6:51pm – Period 3
6:54pm – 7:04pm – Period 4
7:07pm – 7:17pm – Period 5
7:20pm – 7:30pm – Period 6
7:33pm – 7:43pm – Period 7
7:43pm – 8:00pm – Optional Technology Support with iUpdate and Schoology – Raffle to win prizes!

This is a highly recommended event to help families learn about your child's middle school experience, meet staff members and see our wonderful school. We look forward to seeing you all at our annual Open House Event!

Picture Day

Wednesday, September 25th

Please do not wear Green!

PTO Plant Sale

<https://murray-fall-plant-sale.square.site/>

SEW SQUAD

A weekly after-school program for kids 6th grade to 12th grade interested in learning the basics of sewing. We will begin with sewing a cubby basket to keep their sewing projects throughout the year. Over time, the kids will choose their own sewing projects from a selection of patterns made available by The Makery.

The Makery, 2230 Carter Avenue, #8
St. Paul, MN 55108

For more information, please click on the link below.

<https://www.themakery.space/sew-squad>

St. Paul Alpine Ski Team

Interested in ski racing? Join the **St. Paul Alpine Ski Team** (SPAST)! The team is open to SPPS students in grades 7-12. Spots are limited so priority will be given to high school students. While some alpine skiing experience is necessary, racing experience is **not** required. It should be noted this is a race team and **not** a ski club. The team practices on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Afton Alps. The activity fee is \$250/\$40 for free and reduced lunch. In addition, skiers will need their own equipment, and a season pass to Afton is required (currently \$501, price does increase as season gets closer). Bussing is provided and departs from Central and Highland High School. Please fill out [this form](#) to sign up to be invited to our informational meeting or email annekettler@yahoo.com for more information.



Counselors Corner

Welcome to a new school year!

In the newsletters, our mental health/counseling team will post updates and resources throughout the year!

Here at Murray Middle School, we have 2 school counselors:

- Ms. Justine Revermann - justine.revermann@spps.org - 651-744-7130: Student last names A-L
- Ms. Stephanie Lee - stephanie.lee@spps.org - 651-744-3600: Student last names M-Z

Throughout the school year, our school counselors will be giving classroom lessons every quarter to each grade. For quarter one, we will be giving a mental health and bullying lesson to all grades, and a personal learning plan (PLP) lesson to 6th and 8th grade. The counseling team will also work to meet with every 8th grader individually to go over their future plans and goals during their PLP meeting.

We also have 2 social workers:

- Mr. Noah McGurran Hanson - noah.mcgurran-hanson@spps.org - 651-744-2725
- Ms. Jessie Phillips - jessie.phillips@spps.org - 651-744-3437

Lastly, we have a school-based Mental health therapist, Ms. Sarah Beam, through our partnership with Change Inc. Sarah is at Murray every day! She has an informational flier included in this newsletter. Please connect with a counselor or social worker to put in a referral for your child to work with Sarah, or to talk more about therapeutic options.





Your Mental Health Professional

Sarah Beam, MSW, LGSW

I AM HERE TO SUPPORT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES!

SERVICES PROVIDED IN SCHOOL, HOMES, AND THE COMMUNITY INCLUDE:

- Child, Adolescent, and Family Therapy
- Skills/Support Groups
- Professional Development for Staff
- Psychoeducation and Support for Parents/Guardians
- Online sessions via Zoom

The Community & School Collaborative (CSC) is a program of Change Inc., providing prevention, early intervention and mental health services.

Did you know we also offer out-patient clinic services? Scan the QR code to learn more about Change Clinic:



CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL-BASED THERAPIST:

Sarah Beam

SBeam@thechangeinc.org

612-239-7127

*Speaks Spanish & English

**CSC Services are funded by Saint Paul Public Schools, MN Department of Human Services, and health insurance.*





Murray PTO

PLANT SALE



Taking orders through
Sept 25



Things to Know About the Transition to Middle School

Students do well when parents, school staff and caring adults understand both the school changes and the personal changes that are underway for middle grades students.

During the transition from 5th to 6th grades, academic and social emotional expectations during the school day increase. If you notice that your student is exhausted, overwhelmed or struggling with the transition, don't hesitate to reach out to your student's school counselor with your concerns. Some of these symptoms can be typical, yet you know your student best. We encourage you to have conversations with your school counselor, family medical provider and/or a trusted mental health professional as you continue to support your student.

1

Physical changes strongly influence the middle school years. Keep dialogue open with your student about how they are feeling and managing the changes they are experiencing. Students may feel exhausted and need more rest due to all the growing their brains and bodies are doing.

2

Exploring identity is important work for middle grades students. Students explore interests, expand social networks, learn new ways of thinking and express differing opinions. This is an important part of figuring out who they are and want to be in the world.

3

The parent/child relationship matures during the middle years. As your student shares experiences and challenges with you, it's important to affirm them, communicate what you are noticing and share the type of behavior you respect. When it comes to peer relationships, while middle grades students need adult guidance, they also need to make their own decisions.

4

Social media and technology use increase during the middle grades. We encourage parents/guardians to take an active role in your student's online presence. Check their page and read their posts. Be curious with your child about what they are doing online. Talk with them about staying safe and respectful, while monitoring that your student is having healthy interactions with peers online.

5

Encourage practice and growth with school skills like organizing their binder and backpack, checking Schoology (grades) and taking responsibility for completing missing assignments or scheduling study time. Middle grades are an important time for students to practice communicating their needs. Let them know it's normal to need help and it's okay to ask for what they need from their teacher and all school staff.





Middle School Foundations Syllabus

Middle School Foundations is a year-long course designed to foster community and connectedness at school between students and staff. Foundations curriculum and activities help to create explicit space for students to experience belonging while learning new information and skills during the key developmental years of middle school. The Foundations curriculum includes lessons in the following areas: social emotional learning, financial literacy, digital citizenship, and personal learning plans.

Quarter 1 Learning	
Community Building	Students will work with their teacher to establish Classroom Agreements that promote safety, respect, and promote belonging. Students will learn about the Students Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.
Digital Citizenship	Students will explore digital citizenship concepts including: copyright and plagiarism, responsible online behavior, and learning to recognize and stand up to cyberbullying.
Social Emotional Learning (Second Step)	Unit 1: Mindsets & Goals: Students learn how to develop a growth mindset and apply research-based goal-setting strategies to their social and academic lives.
Academic (AVID) & Personal Learning Plans (Xello)	Practicing time management strategies, learning the importance of establishing a study space, and beginning middle school opportunities for career exploration in Xello.

Quarter 2 Learning	
Social Emotional Learning (Second Step)	Unit 2: Bullying & Harassment: Students learn how to recognize bullying and harassment, stand up safely to bullying, and respond appropriately to harassment.
Personal Learning Plans (Xello)	Students will connect school academic subjects to specific career pathways and begin visioning for future plans (college and career).





Quarter 3 Learning	
Academic Skills (AVID)	Students will learn and practice focused note-taking. Students will explore news articles on various social justice issues and practice taking two column notes.
Social Emotional Learning (Second Step)	Unit 3: Thoughts, Emotions & Decisions: Students learn how to recognize strong emotions and unhelpful thoughts, and they learn to apply strategies for managing their emotions and reducing stress.
Financial Literacy (Everfi)	Students will complete 6 lessons that cover the following topics: financial decision making, budgeting and spending, careers and incomes, credit and borrowing, and future planning.

Quarter 4 Learning	
Social Emotional Learning (Second Step)	Unit 4: Managing Relationships and Social Conflict: Students learn strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships, perspective-taking, and dealing with conflict.
Personal Learning Plans (Xello)	End of Year Personal Learning Plan Portfolio in Xello <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include one piece of academic work• Include one Xello activity insight• Include a reflection (creative end of year project)

**For a full scope and sequence of lessons and student standards by grade level, please [click here](#). To take a closer look at the Second Step curriculum for Middle School students, [please visit this website](#).

Grading

Grading in Foundations is on a Pass / No Pass scale. Students are expected to attend Foundations regularly, engage with the lessons, participate in the classroom discussions/activities and develop proficiency in the identified student standards in the lesson objectives.

Caregiver Involvement

We encourage caregiver involvement in each student's growth and development. There are many opportunities to converse with your student about topics discussed in Foundations. You can read caregiver newsletters for the Second Step social emotional topics. Ask your student to show you their personal learning plan in Xello. You can also access a parent/guardian account in Xello to view their plan.

Parent/Guardian Account for Xello - Personal Learning Plans





Parents and guardians who have provided SPPS with their email address and are designated as your student's primary contact will receive an email from Xello to activate your Xello Family account. You can add your email address to your Campus Parent account at www.spps.org/onestop. Learn how to use Xello by going to www.spps.org/academics/college-and-career-readiness/xello-family. If you need support accessing your Xello Family account, please contact Katie Gardner at katie.gardner@spps.org or 651-603-4941, or your child's school counselor.





Murray Middle School Bell Schedule



Period 1	8:30 – 9:21
Period 2	9:25 – 10:16
Period 3	10:20 – 11:11
Period 4	11:15 – 12:07
Lunch 6	11:40 – 12:07
Period 5	12:11 – 1:08
Lunch 7	12:11 – 12:38
Lunch 8	12:41 – 1:08
Period 6	1:12 – 2:04
Period 7	2:08 – 3:00

We follow the “Murray Way” of being
Respectful, Responsible and Safe



Parent Quick Access to Infinite Campus and Schoology

Saint Paul Public Schools uses 2 systems to communicate grades, homework, and attendance to families.

Schoology is where students submit assignments and participate in class activities. Daily grades and homework can be viewed here.

Campus Parent/Campus Student (Portal) contains general parent information, interactive tools, and students' attendance.

1

Schoology: Online application that helps parents, guardians, families, and students stay informed about classes, assignments, and grades. You can use Schoology to:

- View your student's courses
- View assignments that are due
- View grades
- View school and class announcements



Learn all about how to use Schoology by going to <https://www.spps.org/onestop> and clicking on [Schoology](#). On this page, you will find:

- Parent Guide to Schoology in [English](#), [Hmong](#), [Karen](#), [Somali](#), and [Spanish](#).
- [How to turn in assignments](#)
- [How to contribute to a discussion](#)

2

Campus Parent/Campus Student (Portal): Online application that helps parents, guardians, families, and students view and interact with attendance, final grades, class schedules, transcripts, and household information.



Learn all about how to use Infinite Campus by going to [Campus Parent and Campus Student \(Portal\) Overview](#). On this page, you will find information on how to log in and how to navigate Infinite Campus Parent Portal. You can log in to Infinite Campus Parent Portal at <https://www.spps.org/onestop>.

The same username and password work for both Schoology and Infinite Campus.

Active Directory Username: _____

Active Directory Password: _____



**Interpreter Available
Upon Request**

**Intérprete disponible
bajo petición**

**neeg txhais lus muaj
raws li qhov kev thov**

**ล่ามแปลภาษาให้บริการ
ตามคำขอ**

