

Middle School Handbook

Dear Parents and Students,

This guidebook contains information on school policies, procedures and topics that will help you navigate the Middle School experience at SunRidge School. In order for schools to operate safely and efficiently, it is important that students and families are familiar with, and abide by the expectations, procedures and rules outlined in this document. The guidebook is posted online and is subject to amendments during the school year. An up-to-date version will be maintained online at the [SunRidge School website](#).

Notice of any changes will be communicated via email and will take effect upon notification. The following page is an acknowledgement that you have read and understand the guide and policies and agreements therein.

When questions and concerns arise, the practice of communicating directly is an essential ingredient for both individual and community success. Towards that goal, we request that students and parents contact, and communicate directly with the person most closely related to the given subject of concern.

We look forward to a year of exciting learning opportunities and are glad you have chosen to be part of the vibrant SunRidge Middle School experience.

NOTE: The School has the right to amend the guide for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made. This guide is designed to familiarize the reader with the major policies and practices in place at SunRidge in the Middle School at the time of publication. While every effort has been made to make this guide as complete and encompassing as possible, and does provide general guidance in many areas it cannot address all situations. All previously issued guidebooks and any inconsistent policy statements are superseded with the publication of this guide. SunRidge reserves the right to revise, modify, delete, or add to any and all policies and practices stated in this guide or any other document.

Acknowledgment

We, the undersigned, hereby acknowledge that we have read and understand the *SunRidge School Middle School Handbook*.

Print Student Name

Student Signature
Date

Print Parent 1 Name

Parent 1 Signature Date

Print Parent 2 Name

Parent 2 Signature Date

Please return this form to the class teacher.

Table of Contents

Direct Communication	3
Academic Integrity	4
SR Technology Acceptable Use Agreement	5
Dress Code Policy	7
Restorative Discipline Guidelines	8
Student Behavior Report	8
Notice to Parents	11
Middle School Homework Guidelines and Late Homework Policy	13
Shadowing High Schools	16
High School Application Process and Instruction	18
High School Recommendation Request Form	19
Guidelines for a Middle School Student Proposal	21
Healthy Food and Drink/Low Waste Agreement	21
Note Taking in the Middle School	23
The Block Switch and Electives	24
Student Social Action Committee	25
Middle School Dance Guidelines	25
Health Education and Social Emotional Development Topics	27
Textbooks in the Middle School	28
Comprehensive Sexual and Mental Health Education	29
Mental Health Resources	30

Direct Communication

Empowering the Middle School Student to Self-Advocate in Preparation for High School and Life

As with all skills, we always want to provide adult examples worthy of imitation. This means that teachers and parents should model healthy, direct communication with each other and with the students. As a developing skill, the students will need a lot of support and guidance throughout middle school. Learning to communicate effectively and solve problems is as important as doing well academically. These important life skills are highly emphasized on high school recommendations. The ability to clearly communicate and self-advocate is essential to the students' success in high school and beyond.

To begin with, we want to keep the student in the “center vs. middle” of the adult’s interactions. To do this, parents and teachers need to act as a team and not pit the student against the teacher or parent against the teacher. The adolescent in middle school at times may try to avoid responsibility or deflect blame by positioning adults against one another. The adults need to turn the focus back to the student to find some learning or area for which they can take responsibility. This is most easily accomplished when the adults assume goodwill from each other, and that the student, not the adults, are responsible for challenges. That is why if you hear something troubling from your student, directly contact the teacher via their preferred means, and whenever possible **begin the discussion with a question not an assumption or confrontation.** For example, “My child told me about xxxx. Could you tell me more about it?” In this manner you will add the teacher’s perspective to your student’s perspective before forming any opinion about or against a teacher or another student. And we ask that you keep in mind that your child’s perspective is a child’s perspective, living in the emotional realm. The adult professional’s perspectives are based on facts, not emotions.

How to start

Encourage your student to speak to her/his peers or teachers directly. While adults often naturally want to jump in to solve problems for their child, it doesn’t always work at this age and can disempower the student from true learning and growth. Instead, support your student by preparing for hard conversations through role playing, offering help by framing an opening question and letting them know that, while difficult, you know they can learn this skill. Reviewing each conversation afterwards for what they felt went well and what could go better in future conversations is also helpful. Avoid joining in their “feeling life” and strong emotions, which is not always easy especially if an adult has had similar issues in their own biography. Often what is most needed is for them to feel heard and that the adults have an understanding that they are juggling a lot during these critical years.

Who to talk to when:

Topic:	Student to contact:
Any concern relating to a class, academic or otherwise	Teacher teaching the subject where there is concern

Unresolved conflict w/classmate or subject teacher	Class Teacher and/or student involved
General question about school policy/request or proposal	Middle School Team (MS Teachers & Director) *See guidelines for MS student proposal
Unresolved concern with a teacher or student after multiple attempts	Parent meeting with Teacher, or with Teacher & Director.

Academic Integrity

Please read and familiarize yourself with the SunRidge School Academic Integrity Policy.

Students should

- Be honest
- Do their own work without cheating

Students may

- Get help on homework from others as long as the helper is not providing answers or completing assignments for you.

Students should not

- Cheat
- Plagiarize
- Use AI to write papers

Consequences for violating the academic integrity policy

- Conference with teacher, parents, students, and/or director.
- Letter to Parents
- Reduced grade for re-written assignments.
- Permanent record in student file (second offense)
- No credit for assignments (second offense)
- Suspension/in-house suspension (third offense)
- Failing grade for block/subject (third offense)

SR Technology Acceptable Use Agreement

During 3rd through 8th grade at SunRidge School, students will increase their use of electronic technology both inside and outside of the classroom. To support a healthy and productive learning environment for both the students and teachers, the following agreements are required:

“THUSD Technology, Network, and Internet Student Acceptable Use Policy”, which can be located on THUSD’s website

Use of School Chromebooks

Students will be assigned a portable “Chromebook” and charger. Students may perform online research, project development, word processing, typing practice, or other applications permitted by the teacher. The following guidelines are required for SR Chromebook usage:

- Students may not use a personal Chromebook in class and must use their THUSD assigned Chromebook.
- Students may not install or add any software applications on the Chromebooks.
- Students may not download music or videos onto Chromebooks except as needed to complete school assignments.
- Students may not disable or bypass Securly apps on Chromebooks.
- Students must handle the Chromebooks with care and not modify any hardware.
- Students may not access personal social networking sites, computer games, chat rooms, or any other school inappropriate applications.
- Students may not put stickers on the school Chromebook or personalize in any way.
- Students may not use the Chromebook to take pictures, videos, or screenshots, except when required for assignments.
- Students may not access personal email accounts, and must only use their THUSD provided email address (@students.twinhillsusd.org) for school work.
- Students may only print if they have permission from the teacher.
- Students may only visit websites approved by the teacher.
- Damage to school Chromebooks due to misuse will result in repairs or replacement and parents may be billed.

The consequences for not following these guidelines for use of school Chromebooks are as follows:

If the student does not follow these guidelines, the teacher will suspend their Chromebook privileges for a period of time and notify the parent. Usually this will be 24 hours for a first offense and 2 days for a second offense.

Use of Personal Electronics

For students, whose parents choose to have their students bring personal electronic devices, including cell phones, smart watches, fit bit, music devices, etc. to school:

1. Devices will be powered down.
2. Devices will be stored in a specially designated location kept in the front office, and collected at the end of the day.
3. Devices will remain powered off until off campus. Use of devices is not permitted on campus at drop off or dismissal.
4. Parents and students acknowledge that bringing personal electronics to school may result in damage or theft to their devices, for which the school is not responsible for.
5. Parents will complete the authorization form below so that teachers know which students should be placing phones in the office location.

The consequences for not following these guidelines for use of personal electronics are as follows:

1) **First incident:** the electronic device will be confiscated and held in the office until the student's parent comes in to collect it.

2) **Second incident:** the electronic device will be confiscated and held until a conference between the parents is arranged. At the conference, the outcome of the meeting will result in either:

- a) Suspending the student's privilege of bringing an electronic device to school for any reason, for an agreed upon period of time, or
- b) Having the school write up a behavior report for the student's permanent file documenting the repeated disregard of the rule.

3) **Third incident:** the electronic device will be confiscated and must be picked up by the parent. There will be an automatic behavior report recorded in the student's permanent file followed by a school community service.

Google Classroom and Student Aeries™

Teachers may use Google Classroom to post class schedules, assignments, and other communications for the students. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check the Google Classroom and Aeries for information prior to emailing the teacher to request information about assignments. Parents can periodically check the status of assignments, as well as scores, on Aeries. Students are given time during the school day to check Aeries and Google Classrooms.

Dress Code Policy

Please read and familiarize yourself with the <http://www.sunridgeschool.org/parent-handbooks.html>. The guidelines students should know and follow are below.

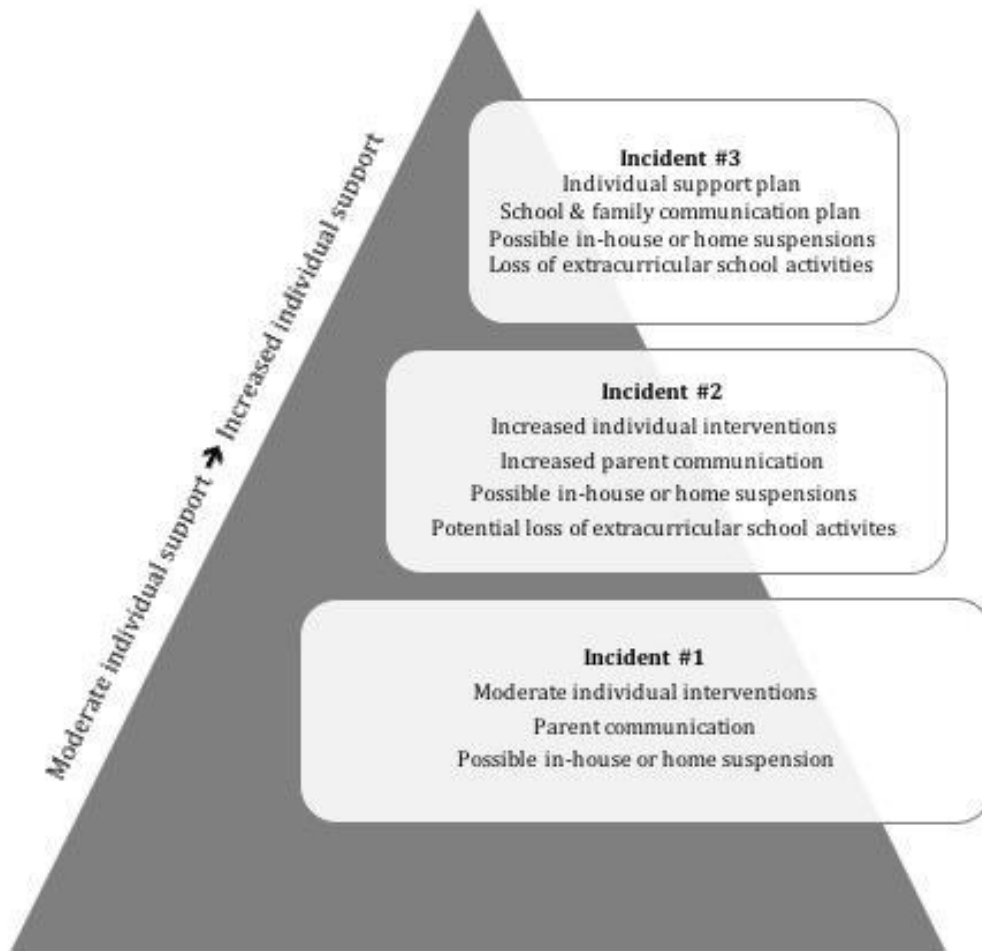
The following guidelines shall apply to all regular school activities:

1. Clothing, jewelry, hats, and personal items shall be free of writing, pictures, or any other insignia which is vulgar, lewd, obscene, profane, discriminatory or sexually suggestive or which promotes the use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or other illegal activity.
2. Shoes must be worn at all times. For grades TK -7, shoes must be closed toe. For Grade 8, open toe shoes may be worn as long as closed toe shoes are worn for all movement activities.
3. Hoods on sweatshirts and jackets shall not be worn indoors.
4. Clothes shall conceal undergarments.

Restorative Discipline Guidelines

Our goal at SunRidge is to create a positive learning environment and support healthy social interactions where students have the necessary skills to self-regulate their own behavior and learning. We use a restorative discipline approach that is aimed to build classroom communities that are supported by clear agreements, authentic communication, and specific tools to bring issues and conflicts forward in a helpful way. This provides specific pathways for students to take responsibility for their actions, repair harms, increase social and emotional skills, and come to agreement about setting things right.

The Student Behavior Report and Action Plan is for serious or repetitive behaviors.* These reports result in a phone call home, accumulate per year, and become part of the student's permanent school record.



* These actions are general guidelines. School may use discretion when using these restorative discipline guidelines.

Student Behavior Report

Report # _____

Students must return this completed form to the class teacher the following school day in order to be readmitted to class.

Student Name _____ Date _____

Teacher _____ Grade _____

The goal of this Student Behavior Report and Action Plan is to support each student in the following three areas:

1. **Accountability** – to provide opportunities for students to be accountable to those they have harmed, and enable them to repair the harm they caused.
2. **Community safety** – to help students learn to identify solutions that repair harm and keep the community and individuals safe.
3. **Interpersonal development** – to develop healthy social and emotional skills for individual and community benefit.

Teacher description of incident:

Action taken: _____

Teacher signature _____

Student signature _____

Parent signature _____

original: parents cc: office, teacher, rsp

ACTION PLAN

For 3rd through 8th Grade Students

Restorative Dialogue – parents please use the questions below to open up a discussion with your student: Dialogue leads to understanding and action to set things right and repair and restore relationships. Please discuss the following questions with your child. * **Please have student write the answer to each question using complete sentences.**

1. What happened and what were you thinking at the time of the incident?

2. Who has been affected by what happened and how?

3. What about this has been hardest for you?

4. What is one thing you can take responsibility for? What is one thing you need help with?

Notice to Parents

Regular and timely communication between school and home is vital for student success. Progress Reports are issued after each semester (January and June.) In between semesters, teachers periodically send home ***Notice to Parents*** to inform a family if a student has excessive absences, tardies, lower academic performance (in danger of not passing), or a behavior that is continuously interrupting their learning or the success of the classroom. This notice can come from the classroom teacher or a specialty teacher for any student. This communication is intended to provide you with information early in the term so that you may discuss this with your student, and develop a plan for corrective action, prior to the end of the grading terms. The following page is a blank ***Notice to Parents*** for your preview.

SunRidge School
Notice to Parents

For Office Use Only
Mailed ____/____/____
Initials _____

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Teacher: _____ Subject: _____ Current Grade in Subject: _____
(Middle School only)

Dear Parent of Guardian:

*Presently, your child is **not meeting** classroom standards. The attitude, habit, or behavior listed below is interfering with your child's success in the classroom.*

BEHAVIOR

- Excessive talking
 - Disrupts learning environment
 - Inattentiveness
 - Lack of effort
 - Coming to class unprepared
 - Unwilling to work cooperatively
-

ACHIEVEMENT

- Not mastering grade level work
- Incomplete assignments
- Missing assignments
- Poor test scores
- Poor performance on classwork

ATTENDANCE

- Excessive tardies
- Excessive absences
- _____

Additional concerns: _____

Suggestions for improvement: _____

- Please contact teacher to confirm receipt of this notice. by phone by email
- Please contact teacher to schedule a conference. by phone by email
- Please discuss this with your child.

Teacher contact: _____

Student signature: _____ (optional/teacher discretion)

Middle School Homework Guidelines and Late Homework

Generally, homework is geared toward practice and mastery, such as reading, practice problems reinforcing math concepts, music instrument practice, and review and study of block material. These are areas where repetition is valuable in developing mastery and comprehension. Homework is often not an ideal setting for learning new material or applying very new concepts and we strive to do this during school hours. We dedicate extensive time at school to start and often complete assignments, and try to limit homework to allow for a student to have outside of school activities.

In middle school, the target is for approximately 60-90 minutes of regular homework five days a week. This will be toward the lower end of the range in 6th grade and toward the higher end by 8th grade. Sometimes during the year there will be projects, reports, and performances, and homework may become less predictable and dependent on the time management of the student, however teachers will try to adjust the regular homework load to accommodate these fluctuations. Teachers will conduct homework studies during the year where students will explicitly track all homework minutes to see how they are doing in general on meeting the homework targets.

Math is not typically assigned on Friday in 6th and 7th grades, and teachers try whenever possible to not assign new homework on Friday, but it is possible that there is some homework over the weekend that involves reading, studying, and/or catch up work from the week. Here is an estimated breakdown of daily homework:

Monday thru Friday in 7th and 8th grade, Monday thru Thursday 6th grade

15-20 minutes of Math Practice (8th Grade Algebra 30 minutes)

15-20 minutes of specialty class homework (usually Music and Spanish)

20 minutes of Language Arts Practice (reading, vocabulary, writing)

*15-20 minutes of Main Lesson (studying or writing, if not completed in class)

Obviously, there will be variation based on the student, and some students will require more or less than the target. Another variable is the amount of work that the student completes during work time made available at school. Another factor is the individual pace of the student. If your student is spending much more than is expected on a regular basis, that is a sign that the teacher, parent, and student should meet together to develop a plan to bring the student back in line with expected time for homework.

If on a particular evening a student is spending excessive time for current homework (make-up work excluded), a parent may send a homework log to the teacher logging the amount of homework completed by subject that evening and request an extension. The homework log is located in this handbook. Excessive time is considered to be more than twice the projected time amount of homework minutes. Should this become a repeated occurrence, **the teacher may ask to meet with parents.**

Missing or Late Homework: It is the middle school student's responsibility to turn in homework at the very start of the day when it is due. Homework not turned in at the very start of the day is considered late. Late homework will not receive full credit, and the grade is lowered by a full grade each day the assignment is late (including the day of the assignment). Homework over one week late will receive a maximum 50% completion credit. If work is 1 to 2 days late a student loses 5%, 3 to 4 days 10%, 5 to 7 days 20% and 8 days and up 30%.

Missed homework due to absences: Students who are absent due to illness or shadowing high schools still must make up assigned homework on a timely basis. In the case of shadowing, the student is expected to make arrangements ahead of time to make up the homework that same day. If a student misses school due to illness, the student has one week to make up the homework assignment for full credit. After one week, only 50% credit is available for the assignment.

Missed homework due to personal activities: Students are not excused from completing homework due to personal after school activities or personal commitments. If a student has after school activities that prohibit them from completing homework, they are encouraged to complete homework during the school day at recess and to try to get assignments from the teacher in advance so they can work on them ahead of time.

Missed tests due to absences: If a student is absent when a test is given, they will be required to stay in at recess to make up the test. A recess time will be a quiet and productive setting that is closely supervised by a middle school teacher to ensure test integrity.

Daily Homework Log

Name: _____ Date: _____

Area:	Assignment/Description of Activity	Start Time (HH:MM)	Stop Time (HH:MM)	Total Time (MIN)
Main Lesson				
Main Lesson				
Main Lesson				
Math				
Spanish				
Music				
Language Arts				
Other (specify)				
			TOTAL (MIN):	

Instructions: Record your homework by assignment/activity. Total your time for the day in minutes. _____

Parent Signature: _____ (required)

Explanation of excessive homework: _____

Shadowing High Schools

Most high schools provide an opportunity for 8th Grade students to “shadow” for one academic day. The practice of “shadowing” means the 8th grader attends the high school for a school day by joining an assigned high school student as they attend their regularly scheduled classes. This allows 8th Grade students the opportunity to learn more about the high school and discern their interest. Most shadowing takes place in 8th grade from September through early December. On occasion students will shadow in 7th grade. If a 7th grader shadows a particular school they will not be granted an excused absence for shadowing that same school in 8th grade. In general, SR recommends that students wait until their 8th grade year to begin the shadowing process.

While shadowing is beneficial to help students determine next steps for high school, it can negatively affect their acquisition and performance with the 8th grade curriculum. Students will be expected to inform teachers of the upcoming absence due to shadowing and to preview what instruction they will miss and ascertain how to complete the work for that day.

Students will be responsible for turning in their schoolwork on the day they return from the shadow day and are not given additional time as they are when absent due to an illness.

When a school is under serious consideration by a student, SR fully supports shadowing. To avoid unnecessary shadow days, SR encourages parents and students to attend open houses offered in the evening or weekends prior to shadowing to carefully determine whether a shadow day is needed. Shadowing can negatively impact a student’s access to instruction and even academic performance, and presents challenges for both students and teachers to plan for the missed instructional time. When anticipating upcoming shadow days, students (with support from their parents) must adhere to the following steps.

1. Email both the teacher and Office with the scheduled shadowing date at least 2 weeks in advance.
2. An SR Shadowing Form, obtained at the SR office (or teacher website) before the visit, must be signed by the teacher or administrator at the High School visited on the date of the visit. This form must then be returned to the SR office for the absence to be excused the next school day.
3. The student is responsible for ensuring that his/her absence will not adversely affect his/her schoolwork, and current assignments must be submitted upon return for full credit in most cases.

SHADOW FORM INSTRUCTIONS

- Form must be signed by student and parent and approved by the principal/designee of student's school of residence prior to shadowing
- The student must bring the form to the school they are shadowing and present it when checking in
- The principal/designee of the shadowing school must sign the form verifying the student's participation in shadowing that day
- It's the student's responsibility to bring the completed form to the attendance office the following day to clear the absence (keep with attendance/absence records)
- The attendance code for a shadow day is F (field trip)

REQUEST/PERMISSION TO SHADOW
& ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION

**STUDENT: RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR SCHOOL'S ATTENDANCE OFFICE,
FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE**

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

SECTION A: REQUEST / PERMISSION (completed by student, parent and school of attendance)

Student Name: _____ Date of Request: _____

School of Attendance: _____ Date of Shadow Day: _____

School Site Shadowing: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal/Designee Signature: _____ Date: _____

SECTION B: ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION (completed by school shadowed)

School Site Shadowed: _____ Date Shadowed: _____

Principal/Designee Signature: _____ Date: _____

High School Application Process and Instruction

Dear 8th Grade Parents and Students:

<p>If your child is applying to any private high school or to a school-within-a-school program (MSA or STEM), let us know by December 1st. These schools ask for input from SunRidge School teacher recommendations, transcripts, discipline, attendance data and/or test scores. We need to have a release of confidentiality form from you before we release this data.</p>	<p>The final date to request recommendations and transcripts from SunRidge School teachers/Staff /Office is December 1st. Most high schools require our input by mid-January, and we need time to write recommendations and prepare packets before their deadline.</p>
<p>Forms Provided to SunRidge by Parents</p>	<p>Your student needs to provide a “brag sheet” to each teacher who agrees to write a recommendation. Check each high school’s website. Some schools (Marin Academy, Sonoma Academy, St Vincent’s) provide Transcript Request forms that must be signed by a parent and submitted to their student’s middle school. Some schools (Branson, Marin Catholic, The Marin School) have online processes set up, and they will ask parents to submit email addresses for teachers and/or a counselor/administrator. For the counselor/administrator’s email address.</p>
<p>Turn in Fee and Forms</p>	<p>Drop off the signed forms to the front office on or before December 1st.</p>
<p>Forms Provided to High Schools by SunRidge</p>	<p>Some or all of the following: teacher/counselor/administrator recommendations, transcripts, attendance data, discipline records, test scores. We are not able to accommodate requests made after December 1st.</p>

If you have any questions, please email the office

High School Recommendation Request Form

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Need a letter of recommendation for high school?

Complete and return this form no later than December 1st to the office.

1. **Write a “brag sheet” about yourself.** Your brag sheet should contain any or all of the following: your positive personal qualities, your favorite subjects (and why), your hobbies, your interests, your activities (sports, clubs, youth groups), your accomplishments, your talents, any hardships or challenges you have overcome, any awards you have received, any leadership roles, any work experience, and any volunteer experience.

2. Make copies of the brag sheet. Keep one for yourself, provide one to each teacher who you ask for a recommendation, and give one to Jill Healy.

3. List the private high schools and/or school programs that you are applying to:

Write name of school here	Write name of school here
Write name of school here	Write name of school here
Write name of school here	Write name of school here

4. Visit each teacher who you would like to write a recommendation **on or before December 1st**. Politely ask the teacher whether he/she will write a recommendation for you. If he/she says yes, give them a copy of your brag sheet. **Fill in their name below and ask the teacher to sign by their name. Write the name of the school/program that the teacher will write a recommendation for.**

Name of teacher/ other	Signature of Teacher	School/Program/Subject
Name of teacher/ other	Signature of Teacher	School/Program/Subject
Name of teacher/ other	Signature of Teacher	School/Program/Subject

5. For every school/program you’re applying to, check their website for forms that you need to submit to Novato Charter School (for example: Transcript Releases). Many schools/programs require transcripts, grades, attendance, discipline, and test scores.

Your parent must sign here to authorize release of this data:

Signature of Parent	Signature of Student
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6. Novato Charter School requests a \$35 fee to cover staff time and office supplies. Please make checks payable to “Novato Charter School”. **Please deliver the payment, any forms you need to submit to SunRidge a copy of your brag sheet, and a copy of this completed signed SRHigh School Request form on or before December 1st to the office.**

Guidelines for a Middle School Student Proposal

Dear Middle School Student,

As a school we are committed to utilizing Direct Communication with each other. This means that when we have a request, concern or question we direct it to the person most closely associated with the topic. For the most part this means that when a topic arises you will direct your inquiry to your class teacher. At times you may want your topic considered by a larger audience or the topic might be relevant to a larger decision making group i.e. the Middle School Team. When this is the case you may submit your proposal, request or topic of consideration to the MS Teaching Team. Below we have outlined the format for submitting your proposal. The Middle School Team is comprised of the MS Teaching Faculty and the director. We generally meet on Monday afternoons and are usually able to review requests **submitted by the Friday before the Thursday meeting**. If we have a full agenda we will notify you that your proposal will be reviewed the following Monday. For consideration your proposal must meet the following criteria:

- o *Final Draft quality*
 - o Neat (typed or handwritten)
 - o Contains a date, opening and closing
 - o Contains the name of submitter
- o Clearly state the request and supporting ideas in a respectful manner.

You may choose to utilize a memo format as follows:

To:

From:

Date:

Subject:

Opening

Summary

Conclusion

A Middle School Team member will follow up with you regarding your proposal within a week after the Monday it was considered.

Please feel free to ask any MS Team member for clarification.

Warm Regards,

MS Team

Healthy Food and Drink/Low Waste Agreement

While the middle school student may be expected to pack their own lunch, it is important to provide them with plenty of healthy food options in packaging that can be easily reused and not generate waste or litter on campus. We strive to be zero waste, so any landfill trash brought in that is not recyclable needs to be packed back home. Please have all containers and lunch containers clearly labeled with your student name so misplaced items can be easily returned.

Sweets and Treats. Students are not allowed to bring sweets, treats, or candy in their lunches. We do allow for treats to be served on for special occasions (birthday celebrations, etc.).

Drinks. The only drink that is allowed to be brought to school is water in a refillable water container. We do not allow sugary carbonated, flavored, or caffeinated drinks, milk, chocolate milk, juices, teas, or other sugary drinks. When these drinks spill on the rug they are difficult to eradicate from the carpets. Also do not send students on campus in the morning with drinks from the local coffee shop in single use containers. Again, these produce waste in the classroom and the potential for spillage or exploding.

Messy Food Items. Please be aware that we often eat in the classroom, and that messy food items often fall on the floor. Particularly messy are larger bags of chips or popcorn. These items, if brought to school, should be in individual serving sizes. Larger bags tend to be shared around and subsequently spilled and ground into the floor.

Nut Free Zone. Please avoid raw nuts and peanut butter. In certain classes, where severe allergies are present, nuts are not allowed.

Note Taking in the Middle School

It is recognized that a variety of learning styles must be accommodated to support note taking in middle school, and that there is no single way for taking notes. The Waldorf curriculum stresses oral storytelling, and listening remains the primary method for receiving information from class. But as the content increases, methods for capturing information in written form are developed and supported through instruction and modeling by the teacher.

6th Grade

- Note taking is introduced
- The focus is on format and how to organize notes (i.e., Cornell Notes)
- Students may rely on teacher or peer notes, as needed
- Notes are collected with main lesson work, but are not assessed.
- Guided notes can also be used to develop note-taking skills, and for students who need extra note taking support.

7th Grade

- Students are prompted to capture summary level (outline) information.
- Students are prompted to capture limited supporting details; the depth varies based on the individual.
- Students may continue to rely on teacher or peer notes, as needed.
- Notes are collected with main lesson work for completeness, but are not assessed.
- Guided notes can also be used to develop note-taking skills, and for students who need extra note taking support.

8th Grade

- Students are prompted to capture summary level (outline) information.
- Students are prompted to capture sufficient supporting details; the depth varies based on the individual.
- Notes are collected with main lesson work, and are periodically assessed.
- Guided notes can also be used to develop note-taking skills, and for students who need extra note taking support.

The Block Switch and Electives

The Block Switch

At SunRidge it is our intent to bring to the middle school students a greater variety of teachers that reflect the growing maturity of this population. While keeping the Class Teacher model, the middle school teachers work as a team to hold, guide and teach the middle school classes. In addition to the specialty teachers, the middle school experiences *The Block Switch*. Once a year each middle school class has a block with one of the other middle school teachers. For example, the 6th grade class, while having most of their Main Lesson Blocks taught by their class teacher, will have one block taught to them by the 7th grade class teacher, and another block taught to them by the 8th grade class teacher. In this way the middle school students will have three Main Lesson teachers each year.

Electives

It is also our intent to bring more choice to the middle school students. In addition to the projects that have “choices” built into them, we also offer the middle school one double-period per week for *Electives*. Each Friday between the Fall and Spring Breaks is devoted to bringing a range of classes that the middle school student can choose from. Traditionally we will have 7-9 different elective classes, running the gambit from woodworking to clay, sports to gardening, and murals to Maker Space. We also offer a class we call “Fab Lab” for students who might choose to use that time to catch up on homework or research their own projects. We offer two sessions of electives each year, making a total of six elective choices during a student’s middle school career.

Student Social Action Committee

Seventh and eighth grade students have the opportunity to participate in a student-led leadership and community service group called the Student Social Action Committee, or SSAC. The SSAC helps younger students and peers navigate social challenges by helping supervise recess areas and resolve social difficulties as they occur. They also promote a healthy social environment on campus by developing a “code of compassion” and by facilitating special events, such as No One Eats Alone Day. Students in the SSAC are led by NCS faculty to develop conflict resolution, communication, and leadership skills.

To be considered for the SSAC, a student must formally type a statement that explains their motivation and interest in joining the SSAC. In the statement, they must include one or more examples where they have been involved in bullying, teasing, or social exclusion/isolation and how they can empathize with others who experience this. Their experience can be as the target (victim), the bystander, or the perpetrator (bully). All of these perspectives are valuable to the SSAC committee.

Then at a designated meeting in the fall, the student will read their letter aloud to the existing committee. An important part of being in the SSAC is the ability to talk to students about their personal experiences so this demonstration is essential. The faculty chair will notify students if they are selected into the SSAC, which has a limited number of members.

Students need to be aware that the SSAC requires volunteering their recess time (typically two recesses a week) and occasionally additional time commitments. Once a student is selected into the SSAC, they are expected to fulfill their commitment for the remainder of the year. Should a student miss a meeting or service duty, they will receive a warning. Should they miss a second meeting or service duty, the student’s parents will be notified. After a third missed meeting or service duty, the student will be removed from the SSAC. It is our intent that only students who are truly committed to improving the social environment at NCS are allowed to participate in the SSAC.

Middle School Dance Guidelines

One SR staff member has to be present, a 6-8th grade teacher. A minimum of 6 chaperones is recommended.

Chaperones will be given designated sections to supervise by SR staff. (2 at door, 2 bathrooms, 2 Roaming dance floor area)

All issues and concerns that arise will be directed to the teacher chaperone.

Students may not leave the dance once admitted except to go to the bathroom.

Chaperones are on duty and they are responsible for the safety of the students and the smooth operation of the dance. *Please keep the focus on the students.*

Chaperones are responsible for receipt of money and check-in procedures.

Check in procedures:

- Adults may “sign-in” the students they bring to the dance. This includes the cell phone number(s) of an available adult for pick-up. Alternatively, a dance permission with the required information can be accepted for every student.
- Only students on invited school’s rosters can attend. Class rosters are used to verify this. (Attending schools must provide student rosters at least 1 week prior to the dance)
- Student cell phones must be checked in at the door.

Students not abiding by expectations or who demonstrate inappropriate language or behavior will be asked to leave.

- No inappropriate dancing. No bumping, inappropriate touching, freaking, etc.
- Anyone who behaves inappropriately will be removed from the dance. Parents will be called to provide transportation.
- No alcohol or drugs
- Appropriate dress—no mini skirts, no “short shorts”, no bare midriffs. No shoulderless tops or dresses. No clothing with inappropriate logos.

Students’ parents must be available for pick up at any point during the dance if these guidelines are not followed.

Music must be appropriate for age level and no explicit lyrics are allowed.

I have read, understand, and agree to uphold the middle school dance guidelines.

_____ Chaperone Signature

Health Education and Social Emotional Development Topics

Our Middle School curriculum is rich in social emotional topics. Our Digital Literacy curriculum is rich in social emotional learning content. Teachers also cull from resources such as Teaching Tolerance, Facing History/Facing Ourselves and Welcoming Schools. Besides these ongoing lessons, the Middle School offers and incorporates lessons through special guest speakers, field trips, class meetings and targeted lessons. Presenters have included Beyond Differences, Spectrum, Story Project, Beyond Hunger, Project Kasai, and Sonoma Waste Management.

Suicide Prevention/Stress Management/Coping Mechanisms

HIV/AIDS/STDs – Risky Behaviors (8th)

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Gender Identity/LGBTQIIA+

Eating Disorders/Body Image

Social Isolation/Bullying

Sexual Harassment/Rape

Environmental Awareness and Stewardship

Textbooks in the Middle School

During the course of Middle School students will be loaned textbooks in Math, Science, Spanish, as well as, readers* in Language Arts. It is expected that students will return loaned books in the same condition that they received them. In the case of damaged or lost books, families should make checks payable to SunRidge School to cover replacement costs.

Below find the costs of some of the books that we use.

*Cost of readers varies from book to book.

ELA readers will be replaced at the value of the book

Comprehensive Sexual and Mental Health Education

During middle school, students are exposed to a comprehensive health education curriculum and are automatically opted in to the programs at SunRidge School. As a public school, we are required by legislation from the State of California to educate students on such topics as: AIDS/HIV/STD's and risky behaviors that lead to their transmission, human trafficking, healthy relationships, and suicide prevention. Should you want to review curriculum materials or opt out of any of the following programs, please contact your class teacher for additional information. Here are some of the major topics/blocks you can expect:

- 6th and/or 7th Grade: Discussion of Stress and Healthy vs. Maladaptive Coping Strategies, Discussion of Healthy Relationships
- 7th Grade Human Physiology: Coming of Age (Puberty) and Reproductive Anatomy
- 8th Grade Physiology: Sensory and Nervous System and Effects of Drugs and Alcohol on these systems
- 7th and 8th Grade: Comprehensive AIDS/HIV/STI Prevention (curriculum provided by the Red Cross and other reputable 3rd parties).
- Not grade specific (pending 3rd Party speaker availability): Gender Sensitivity/LGBTQIA+ Awareness, Healthy Body Image, Social Isolation (Beyond Differences), Cyberbullying and Online Predators/Human Trafficking (Polly Klaas Foundation).

Mental Health Resources

Crisis Support at School

SR encourages strong relationships to be built between students and teachers. Students may feel closest to their class teacher who loops with the class, guiding them over the course of a few years. Sometimes students develop closer relationships with specialty teachers who guide them in their education of specific subject matter. We encourage students to notify appropriate school personnel or other adults if they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions.

Other Resources

Marin Crisis Stabilization Unit
(415) 499-6666 (available 24 hours)
250 Bon Air Road, Greenbrae, CA 94904

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)

Call 1-800-273-8255; Spanish Language phone line at 1-888-628-9454
Available 24/7

[Student Mental Health/Suicide Prevention](#)

Resources and information about suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention