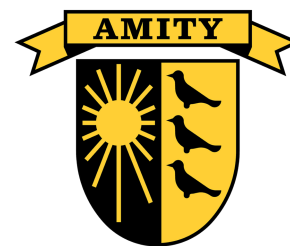


# AMSO Counseling Newsletter

September 13th, 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As your 7th grader enters the Amity School District they will be met with many changes from their years in elementary school. These Counselor Newsletters will provide you with some information about those changes, starting this week with a discussion of grading in the middle schools, grading that differs in some respect from what you and your child may have been accustomed to in elementary school.



The middle school grading system is and has been a traditional letter-based system (A, B, C, D, F) differing from the standards-based grading (1-4) that your child received in elementary school. We understand that this shift may raise some questions, and in some cases worries, so we are here to provide clarity and support as we navigate this shift together.

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## *Understanding the Transition*

- **From Standards-Based to Letter Grades:** While standards-based grading (SBG) focuses on assessing students' mastery of specific learning objectives, traditional letter grades represent overall performance in a subject. This means that grades will now reflect a cumulative assessment of a student's performance throughout the grading period.
- **Grading Criteria:** Traditional letter grades will be based on various assessments, including tests, quizzes, assignments, and projects. These grades will reflect students' overall achievement in relation to the course standards, combining their performance on different tasks.
- **Feedback and Improvement:** While SBG provided detailed feedback on specific skills and standards, traditional grading will emphasize a broader evaluation of student progress.

Teachers will continue to provide feedback and support to help students improve and succeed.

- **Grade Reporting:** Report cards will now feature letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) along with comments that highlight strengths and areas for improvement. This format aligns with more familiar grading practices and provides a summary of overall achievement.

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## *Supporting Your Child Through the Transition*

**Online Gradebook Access:** You will still have access to our online gradebook, where you can track your child's progress and see assignment details. In your PowerSchool account, you can set reminder emails that will be sent to you each week to help you keep track of your child's progress. When reviewing these reports, please be aware that teachers may enter a zero as a placeholder for missing work. If your child has been absent and has not made up their work, this reminder will help them keep track of what is outstanding.

We are committed to ensuring that this transition is as smooth as possible for your child. Teachers will work closely with students to help them understand the letter grading system and continue to provide the support they need to succeed.

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## *Resources for Understanding Traditional Letter Grades*

To help you understand traditional letter grading and how it will affect your child's academic experience, we have provided some online resources:

### 1. Understanding Traditional Grading Systems

This article explains the basics of grading systems, how letter grades work, and what parents need to know about their child's academic progress:

[GreatSchools.org - Understanding School Report Cards and Grading Systems](#)

### 2. Supporting Your Child During Academic Transitions

This guide provides strategies to help children adapt to new academic systems, including changes in grading practices.

[Understood.org - How to Help Your Child Cope With School Changes](#)

### 3. Monitoring Progress with Online Gradebooks

Although this video shows how to set up daily reminders...we recommend that you set reminders to weekly (at most) for sanity purposes!!

[Setting up email reminders in PowerSchool](#)

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## ***Meet your Counseling Team!***

As we embark on this new school year, we want to introduce you to our team and the exciting services and resources we offer to support the well-being and success of our students.

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### **Mrs. Suzanne Neubauer, School Counselor (7th Grade)**

[Suzanne.Neubauer@amityregion5.org](mailto:Suzanne.Neubauer@amityregion5.org) | (203) 392-2082

Mrs. Neubauer specializes in social-emotional learning and is passionate about helping students build resilience and confidence as well as skills in self-advocacy, organization and time management. With over 25 years of experience working with students from K- college, she has found her dream job working with middle school students! Mrs. Neubauer is excited to work in partnership with students, teachers and parents to foster independence, well-being and success.

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### **Mrs. Sharon Remigio, School Counselor (8th Grade)**

[Sharon.Remigio@amityregion5.org](mailto:Sharon.Remigio@amityregion5.org) | (203) 392-2083

Mrs. Remigio works with all her students in the areas of social and emotional development and problem-solving, helping them to make positive choices in their life, set academic goals and work through difficulties in all aspects of their lives. She has had 8 years of experience working as a high school counselor, 2 years working with college-aged students and the past 14 years working with middle school students at AMSO!

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### **Mrs. Jennifer Zoppi, School Psychologist**

[Jennifer.Zoppi@amityregion5.org](mailto:Jennifer.Zoppi@amityregion5.org) | (203) 392-3200 ext. 2026

Mrs. Zoppi focuses on mental health and student achievement. She provides assessments and counseling to help students overcome learning and emotional challenges. Mrs. Zoppi is starting her 17th year as a school psychologist, and her fourth year at AMSO.

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## Ms. Claire McVey, School Social Worker

[Claire.mcvey@amityregion5.org](mailto:Claire.mcvey@amityregion5.org) | (203)392-3200 ext. 2024

Ms. McVey is starting her fourth year at AMSO. Prior to joining the team in Orange, she worked in charter, alternative, and therapeutic school settings. Of all those jobs, her role at AMSO has been her favorite! As the school social worker, Ms. McVey provides counseling and other interventions to help students meet the social and emotional challenges they may encounter in middle school.

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## Mrs. Jennifer Ford, Administrative Assistant

Email: [Jennifer.Ford@amityregion5.org](mailto:Jennifer.Ford@amityregion5.org)

Mrs. Ford is the first face that you will see in the counseling department. She has been a member of the team for the past 6 years. She schedules PPT and 504 meetings for the department and keeps the counseling department running smoothly.

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## Services We Offer

- **Individual Counseling:** Personalized support for students dealing with personal or academic challenges.
- **Group Counseling:** Small group sessions focusing on topics like friendship, stress management, and study skills.
- **Crisis Intervention:** Immediate support for students in urgent need of emotional help.
- **Academic Support:** Assistance with study skills, organization, and goal setting.
- **Parent and Family Support:** Resources and guidance for families to help support their child's development and well-being.

## Resources for Students and Parents

- **Students:** Students can visit the counselors' Schoology pages for helpful articles and resources to support their academic and emotional needs.
- **Parent Workshops:** Stay tuned for announcements about the upcoming "Coffee with the Principal" series designed to equip parents with strategies to support their children.

We encourage parents and students to reach out to counseling staff with questions or concerns. We can be reached by email or phone Monday through Friday from 7:30AM to 3:00PM.

Thank you for your support and partnership. We look forward to a successful school year together!

Warm regards,

The AMSO Middle School Counseling Team



**Amity Middle School - Orange**  
Counseling Department