

Welcome to Middle School at WCS



Welcome and Introductions

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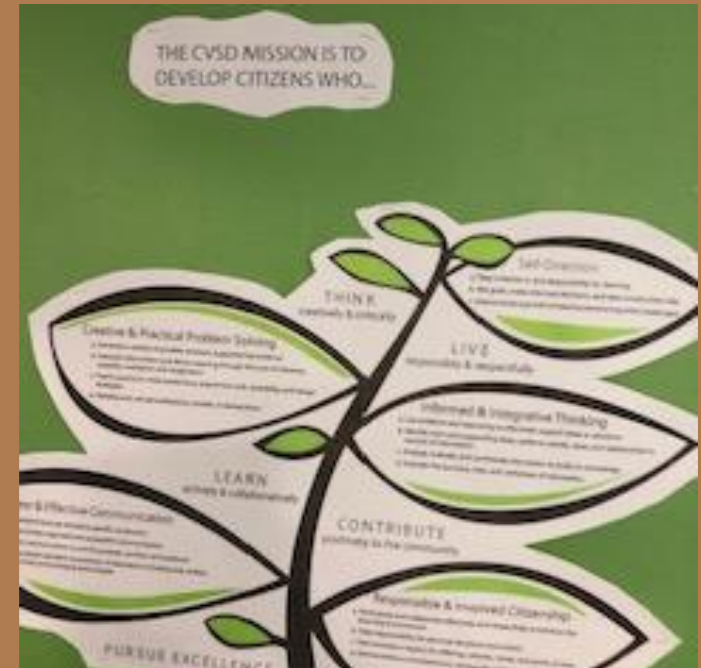
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WCS School Counselors

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A close-up photograph of several wooden blocks on a wooden surface. Some blocks are arranged in a row to spell out the word 'GEN', with subscripts like 'G₂', 'E₁', and 'N₁'. Other blocks are scattered around, some showing letters like 'H' and 'I'.

Agenda for this Evening

- Share information about our middle level program
- Outline the placement and transition activities
- Provide time for questions and answers
- Provide a walking tour of our teams that have 5th grade students

Adolescent Changes

“Young people undergo more rapid and profound personal changes during the years between 10 and 15 than at any other period of their lives.” National Middle School Association (NMSA)





- The brain is under construction until the mid 20's.
- The parts that control impulses and plan ahead mature last.
- The brain connections involving emotional responses are changing throughout the teenage years.
- Sleep deprivation increases impulsive behaviors.
- Belonging to a group and fitting in is becoming most important

Executive Functioning



Definition:

- ★ The brain-based skills that are required for humans to execute, or perform tasks
- ★ Biology and experience play a role in EF development
- ★ Practice is important to develop EF skills
- ★ These skills are a focus of our middle level program



Basic Executive Functioning Skills

Response inhibition

Working memory

Emotional control

Sustained attention

Task initiation

Planning & organizing

Time management

Goal-directed

Flexibility

Metacognition

Middle School Organization

2-YEAR TEAMS

Clover House 5th/6th

Sterling House 5th/6th

Harbor House 7th/8th

Summit House 7th/8th

4-YEAR TEAM

Swift House 5th-8th

(5/6 & 7/8 groupings)

What's Different in Middle School?

Academic expectations increase

Independence is the goal

Teachers teach up to 90 students (across 4 teachers) vs 20 so the amount of teacher contact will feel different

Teams use advisory meetings with community building circles instead of morning meetings



Social Emotional Learning

- Advisory: 3 times per week for 25-minutes in small groups
- Focus on creating a sense of belonging, having fun and social emotional learning
- CloseGap: online check-in program 1 time per week



Student Groupings Within Classes

- Math is grade level grouped
- Language Arts/Humanities (includes Social Studies) is either grade level specific or a 2-year group ($\frac{5}{6}$ & $\frac{7}{8}$)
- Science is typically grouped as $\frac{5}{6}$ and $\frac{7}{8}$ for classes
- Literature Groups are formed by interest or reading level



- Essential Arts program:
Art, Design & Technology, General Music, Family and Consumer Science and Physical Education
- School counselors facilitate SEL classes during the Design & Tech rotation
- Essential Arts meets daily for 6-week rotations
- Band & chorus group rehearsals are at a common core time
- Band lessons rotate & students are pulled out of classes

STUDENT CLUBS

[WCS Clubs](#): under WS Extra Curricular Activities on the website

*Needlepoint Club

*Lego Robotics Club

*MathCounts

*Card Club

*Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)

*Side By Side

*Penguin Plunge

*Unified Sports

*CY LEAD

*Garden Club

*And More

[Spark Program:](#)

Thursdays, after school social opportunities embedded in age-appropriate fun learning activities (e.g. cooking, legos, D & D, Needle felting, Outdoor games, Backstage Technology

Teaching Staff & Philosophy



- We hire teachers with middle level training and certification
- Most teachers have certification in at least two content areas of instruction
- All teachers take a role in teaching and supporting literacy
- Teams use common assessments to ensure consistent curriculum across teams
- All teams use the same curriculum which is based on the Common Core and the common CVSD Learning Targets

Curriculum Information

- All teams use the same curriculum which is based on the Common Core and the common CVSD Learning Targets
- JumpRope houses student grades and scores
- Trimester vs Semester reporting system



Assessment Information

- The assessment platform, JumpRope, is used for report cards and reports go out 3 times per year
- Learning habits & academics are assessed separately.
- All grades are scored on a 1-4 proficiency scale.

The Transferable Skills

- *Clear & Effective Communication
- *Responsible & Involved Citizenship
- *Informed & Integrative Thinking
- *Self-Direction
- *Creative & Practical Problem Solving



The background of the slide is split. The left side features a photograph of a white rectangular sign with a black border and the word 'Place' in large, bold, black letters. The sign is mounted on a metal pole. The right side of the slide is a solid, muted orange-brown color.

Placement on Teams

Balance - gender, academic groupings, social needs, behavioral needs etc.

Parent input

Teacher input

Assessment scores

Peer relationships

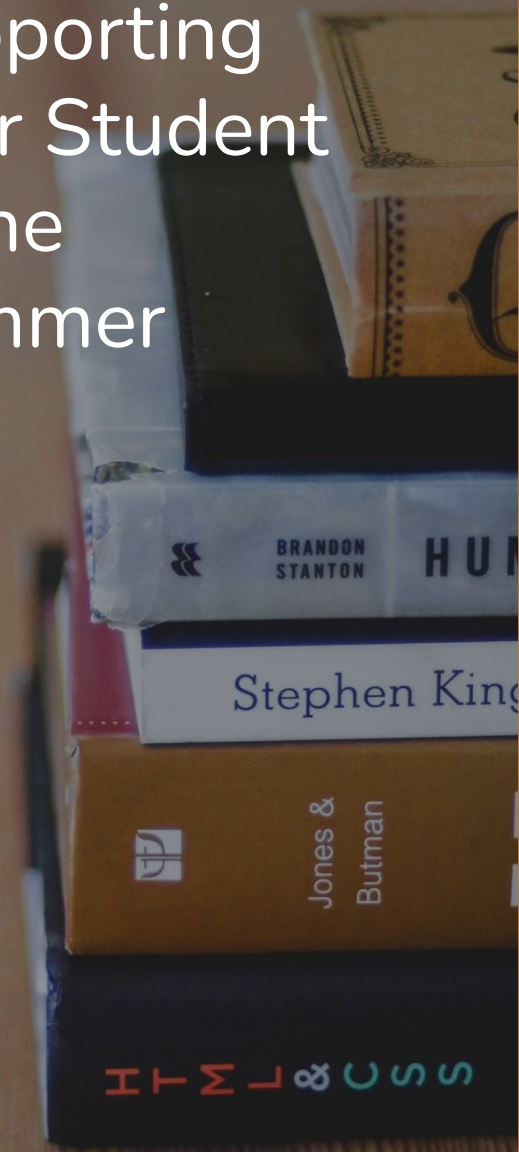
Current siblings team

The Transition



- Step-Up day in June-an opportunity to meet their teachers
- Teacher-to-Teacher sharing time
- Teams make core placement in the summer
- Each student & family will meet with their child's core teacher before school begins
- In late August, there will be a team social to welcome families
- School counselors facilitate transition classes to all 5th graders in the Fall

Supporting Your Student in the Summer

A stack of books is shown on a wooden surface. The books are of various colors and sizes. From top to bottom, the visible spines include a yellow book with a black and white illustration, a black book, a white book with 'BRANDON STANTON' and 'H U' visible, a white book with 'Stephen King', a brown book with 'Jones & Butman' and a small logo, and a black book with 'IT Σ J & U S S' in colorful letters.

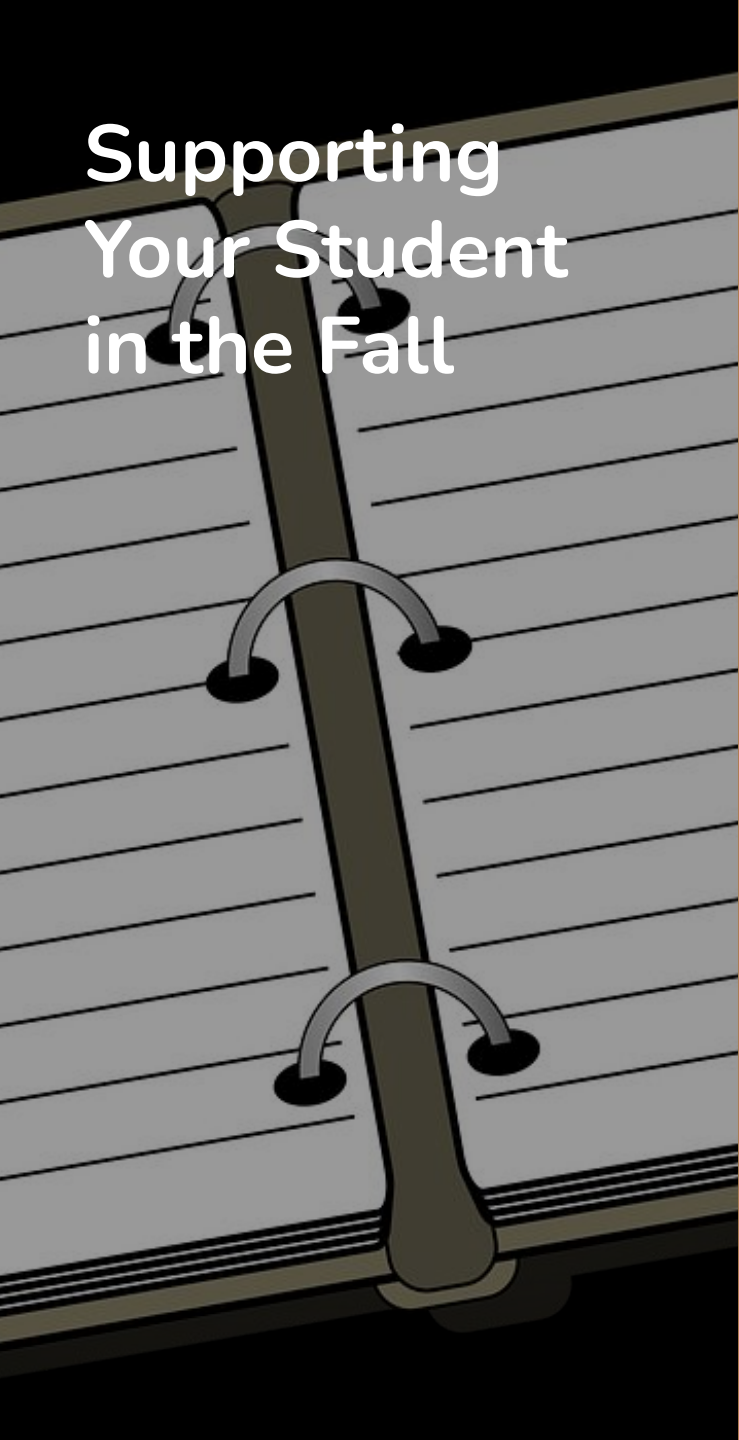
Set aside a regular reading time for your student

Practice basic math facts-especially multiplication & division-if your student has not yet mastered them

Talk about "change" in a positive light

Acknowledge being nervous is normal

Seek out peers also on your child's team and nurture social connections



Supporting Your Student in the Fall

- Encourage and model building positive adult relationships with the team
- Create a clear plan for homework completion at your home
- Check-in regularly with your student-in the past students have found managing friends, homework & organization most difficult
- Communicate with your student's core teacher



Time for Q & A, followed by:
Walking Tour of the teams that have 5th
Graders