



# New Providence Middle School

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Michael Criscitello, Principal

## “Respect, Responsibility & Readiness”

August 22, 2025

Dear Students, Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to our new Junior Pioneers, and welcome back to all our returning students! I hope this letter finds you and your family well and that you’ve enjoyed a fun and restful summer. Over the past few months, we’ve been busy preparing for the 2025–2026 school year, and we are excited to welcome our students back on August 28th!

When students return, they will notice exciting updates throughout the building, including a refreshed look from our *Walls of Pride Project*, made possible with the support of our PTSA. These new designs bring energy to our school and create an environment we know both students and families are proud of.

Please review the important information below to help prepare for the start of school:

### 2025–2026 School Schedules, Key Dates, & Other Relevant Information:

- **2025-2026 Bell Schedules & Calendar:**
  - [Click here](#) for the Rotating and Drop Bell Schedule, Delayed Opening, and Early Dismissal Schedules.
  - [Click here](#) for the Rotation of Days Calendar.
- **First Day:** Thursday, August 28th.
- **Arrival:** Students report to Period 1 by 7:44 a.m.
- **Schedule:** A [modified bell schedule](#) will run on the first day so students can attend all classes and meet each teacher.
- **Schedules Available:**
  - Viewable in the [PowerSchool Portal](#) on Wednesday, August 27.
  - Emailed directly to students on Wednesday, August 27. Once schedules are shared, students are strongly encouraged to **take a screenshot of their schedule and locker information** on their iPads for easy reference.
    - *Note: The PowerSchool iOS app is not accessible on school-issued iPads. PowerSchool will still be accessible via the [website](#) and any personal device.*
  - **Questions about schedules:**
    - Students with last names **A–L**: contact **Ms. Chrisostomides** at [kchrisostomides@npsdnj.org](mailto:kchrisostomides@npsdnj.org).
    - Students with last names **M–Z**: contact **Ms. Stickle** at [jstickle@npsdnj.org](mailto:jstickle@npsdnj.org).
    - Both can be reached in the **Middle School Main Office**.
- **Scheduling Aid Tool:** The Technology Department will again provide a tool that automatically organizes each student’s rotating schedule for the year once their base schedule is entered.
- **Second Day:** Friday, August 29, is an [Early Dismissal Day](#) for students and staff.
  - It will follow an “A” day schedule.
  - Lunch will **NOT** be served.
  - Class meetings will be held to discuss a variety of important school-related items with our students.
    - Grade 7- 10:48 am
    - Grade 8- 11:33 am
- **After Labor Day:** Tuesday, September 2, will be a full “B” day.

### **Student Drop-Off & Pick-Up Information:**

- **Locations:** Students may be dropped off or picked up via **Pioneer Drive** or the **Community Pool Parking Lot**.
  - Families new to the school are encouraged to **drive the area before August 28** to review markings and zones.
  - Please review the [Drop-Off & Pick-Up](#) reminders provided by the New Providence Police Department.
- **Drop-Off Procedures:**
  - Pull **as far forward as possible** in the drop-off lane on Pioneer Drive before allowing students to exit.
  - **Do not drop off at the front circle entrance**, helping reduce congestion.
  - **The front circle is not for drop-off or pick-up.**
- **Building Entry:**
  - Students may enter the building **only through the Main Entrance**.
  - Students **are not permitted to open exterior doors** for others.
- **Traffic & Safety Reminders:**
  - Follow traffic signs and markings to ensure student safety and keep the line moving.
  - **Do not leave vehicles unattended** in front of the building.
  - **Do not use the OLP School lot** or private lots (Summit Speech School, NJ Sharing Network) for drop-off/pick-up.
  - We encourage the use of the **Community Pool Parking Lot** as it helps balance traffic flow.
- **Timing & Arrival:**
  - Both High School & Middle School classes begin at **7:44 a.m.**
  - On inclement weather days, traffic will increase, so please plan accordingly.
- **Alternative Transportation:**
  - Bike racks are available near the **Main Entrance** and **Media Center**.
- **Early Arrival Options:**
  - **Cafeteria:** Open for homework or study before school.
  - **Media Center:** Open from **7:15 a.m.** for study, technology use, or printing.

### **Electronic Communication with Parents/Guardians:**

- NPMS will communicate with parents/guardians **electronically throughout the school year**.
- Add [NPMS@npsdnj.org](mailto:NPMS@npsdnj.org) to your email address book to ensure you receive messages.
- If you **do not receive communications** or **change your email address** during the school year, please **contact the Middle School Main Office** so we can update your information.

### **Returning Student Registration:**

- Parents/guardians should have received an email from the District on Friday, August 15, with a link to the [PowerSchool parent portal](#).
- Log in to the portal, navigate to **Forms** on the left side, and then to the **Enrollment** tab to:
  - Update your child's information
  - Electronically sign annual permission forms
  - Acknowledge school district policies for the 2025–2026 school year
- **Must** complete registration for each child before the first day of school, Thursday, August 28.
- If you have not received the email or cannot access your portal, contact the Middle School Main Office immediately.

### **Attendance & Reporting Through PowerSchool:**

- Parents/guardians are asked to report student attendance via PowerSchool.
- New Update (2025–2026):
  - All parents/guardians received a [Student Attendance Communication from the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Uglialoro](#), on Tuesday, August 19, outlining changes to [Attendance Regulation 5200](#).
  - Please review Section B, Number 2 (pages 5–6) for details on excused vs. unexcused absences.
  - Student absences due to illness will only be marked excused with a doctor/physician note; parental notes are no longer considered excused.

### **Cell Phones & Other Electronic Communication Devices:**

- **Policy Reminder:**
  - Please review [Dr. Zirpoli's August 12th communication](#) that was shared with all K-12 parents/guardians, students, and staff.
  - Beginning this school year, students are not permitted to use cell phones, smartwatches, or any other non-school-issued electronic device or have it on their person during the duration of the school day on their person, as per [District Policy 5516](#), [Regulation 5516](#).

- Students who bring devices must store them in their lockers, turned off/silent. Unauthorized use during the school day may result in disciplinary interventions, as per the **NPHS Student-Parent 2025–2026 Handbook**, Cell Phone/Electronic Devices section ([page 13](#)).

- **District Rationale:**

- Supports **academic focus, social development, and emotional health**.
- Addresses research showing increased **anxiety, depression, and social disconnection** tied to excessive phone use.
- Helps students:
  - **Reclaim face-to-face social interactions** to build empathy, resilience, and peer relationships.
  - **Reduce distractions** and strengthen academic habits.
  - **Promote psychological well-being** through healthy technology boundaries.
- **Implementation:** All information and expectations will be reinforced during opening class meetings.

### Health and Safety Procedures and Protocols:

- **Reporting Illness:**

- Parents should report student illnesses via **PowerSchool Absence Reporting**.
- For health-related questions, contact **Mrs. Wright** and **Mrs. Abbatemarco**, HS/MS School Nurses.

- **Nursing Office Protocol:**

- School nurses determine when a student needs to be **sent home**.
- Parents are encouraged to have a **pickup plan** in place.
- Students may return to school when:
  - **Fever-free for 24 hours** (without fever-reducing medication)
  - **No vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours**
  - Feeling well, able to participate fully, and tolerating normal meals
- Contact nurses with any **specific questions about returning to school after illness**.

- **Medical Care During School:**

- Nurses will review medical situations and **communicate with families** before a child returns.
- If a student has a medical condition requiring care during the school day, **contact the school nurses**.

### Water & Hydration:

- **Water-Filling Stations:** Accessible throughout the building for students to refill their bottles during the school day.
- **Recommendation:** Students should bring their **sealable, reusable** water bottles daily and use the stations as needed to stay hydrated.

**Lunch:** Students are permitted to use the cafeteria and Middle School Courtyard (weather & supervision pending) to eat.

### Visitor Procedures:

- **Check-In:**

- Self-service kiosks (iPads) are located in each school's security vestibule.
- Visitors scan a **government-issued ID** (state ID, passport, green card, or other countries' ID).
- If no ID is available, front office staff will **manually enter your name and date of birth** into Navigate 360.

- **Safety Screening:**

- Visitor information is checked against **state and national sex offender databases**.
- Once cleared, visitors receive a **temporary badge** to wear while in the building.

- **Check-Out:**

- At the end of the visit, visitors scan their badge at the kiosk, **return it to the front office**, and exit the building.

### Lockers & Backpacks:

- **Locker Assignment:**

- Students receive a locker for the 2025–2026 school year.
- **7th graders:** Locker numbers/combinations provided at Middle School Orientation; also available via **PowerSchool** → **Locker Info**.
- **8th graders:** Keep the same locker from last year.

- **Locker Use & Behavior:**

- Students may **visit lockers** between class periods, during lunch/homeroom, or with teacher approval.
- **No congregating or loitering** around lockers, hallways, or bathrooms.

- **Backpacks:**

- Must be stored in lockers; **not allowed in classrooms**.

**Picture Day, Tuesday, September 16th:**

- Pictures taken during Physical Education classes and lunch.
- Proofs: Parents/guardians will receive proofs directly from Positive Image Photography.

**Instruction & Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):** Our program continues to emphasize **academic, social, and emotional growth** for all students.

- **Resources for parents/guardians and students:**
  - [NPSD Parent/Student Social Emotional Learning Website](#)
  - [District Mental Health Personnel Contact Information](#)

**MS Back-to-School Night** will be on **Wednesday, September 17th**, and will begin at 7:00 p.m. More information will follow at a later date.

**NPMS PTO:**

- First PTO meeting: **Tuesday, September 30th at 7:00 p.m.** in the Media Center.
- Joining the PTO is a great way to stay involved and support our students. See the [PTO Welcome Newsletter](#) for details.
- Thank you to the MS PTO for organizing an MS Student Luncheon on Friday, September 5th!

Please visit the [district website](#) as well as the [Middle School website](#) for additional updates and plans throughout the course of the school year.

A special thank you to our students, families, community members, administration, Board of Education, faculty, and custodial/maintenance staff for their efforts this summer in preparing for the new school year. It has truly been a team effort, and our Junior Pioneer spirit has once again been on full display.

On behalf of the entire Middle School faculty and staff, we eagerly await our students' return next week. We are excited to welcome our new Junior Pioneers, reconnect with familiar faces, and begin what promises to be a positive and successful 2025–2026 school year.

Enjoy the final days of the summer!



Michael Criscitello  
Principal, New Providence Middle School