

# Pilot School News

September 12, 2025 | Volume #1



## UPCOMING EVENTS >>>

### September 18, 2025

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

### September 23, 2025

No School for Students – Staff  
Development

### September 24, 2025

Picture Day

### October 2, 2025

No School for Students – Staff  
Development

### October 6, 2025

Murray PACT Meeting  
5:00pm – 6:30pm

### October 9, 2025

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

### October 16-17, 2025

No School – State-wide Teacher  
Meetings

### October 22, 2025

Murray PTO Meeting  
6:00pm – 7:15pm

### October 23, 2025

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

### October 29, 2025

Picture Retakes

*Every successful individual knows that his or her achievement depends on a community of persons working together.* **Paul Ryan**

The new school year is off and running and our young Murray scholars are settling into their new schedules with new teachers, friends and opportunities. I want to thank our 8th grade WEB leaders for helping to support the welcoming of our new students and families. They assisted with family tours, community building activities with students and for the first week were visible and present in all hallways helping our new students physically navigate our building. I also want to thank families for setting our students up for success. It was clear that students came in ready to learn, ready to explore and ready to embrace a new year. As the quote above states, it's a community of persons working together that leads to the success of individuals.

At Murray, we understand that it is important to support not only academic development, but also character development as we work to be the best Murray community members we can be. One of the ways we do this is through our Core Value Assemblies. Each quarter is assigned a core value with the first quarter being Dignity. Students will be introduced to what this means and will be celebrated when modeling this core value throughout the first quarter. We look forward to the growth of our students and the leadership that they begin to display!

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

Date - Thursday, September 18

Time - 6-8PM

### Important Note - 6PM is a hard start time as families will be following a compressed version of their student's schedule.

Family experience - Families will 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 with a raffle! 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

6:00pm – 6:15pm – Period 1A

6:18pm – 6:28pm – Period 1B

6:31pm – 6:41pm – Period 2A

6:44pm – 6:54pm – Period 2B

6:57pm – 7:07pm – Period 3A

7:10pm – 7:20pm – Period 3B

7:23pm - 7:33pm - Foundations

7:36pm – 7:46pm – Period 4A

7:49pm – 7:59pm – Period 4B

8:00pm – Raffle to win prizes in the main entrance!

Your Co-Pilot,

Jamin McKenzie

Principal, Murray Middle School

**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

Soraya Folley, Assistant Principal

Richard Terrell, Assistant Principal

**Murray Office Staff**

Maria Telles

Adriana Cruz-Trevino

**Murray Counselors**

Justine Revermann (A-L)

Lisa Engelstad (M-Z)

**Murray School Nurse**

Vanessa Novak

**Murray Parent Liaison**

Stefanie Folkema

**Murray Attendance**

[murrayattendance@spps.org](mailto:murrayattendance@spps.org)

**Athletics**

Fall sports: Flag Football, Soccer & Volleyball!

Practice: Monday – Thursday

3:15 – 4:45

Please register on Arbiter:

<https://students.arbitersports.com/organizations/st-paul-murray-middle-school>

**Attendance**

Student absences/tardies may be submitted through the parent campus, emailed or phoned into the attendance line:

[murrayattendance@spps.org](mailto: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'.

**Extended Day Learning**

Student/Family suggestions for EDL

[Murray Student Input for EDL](#)

[Murray EDL Registration Form](#)

**Fundraiser**

Our Apex Color Games fundraiser is well on its way. We're so excited to tell you about our only major fundraiser this year, Apex Color Games! Apex is a local company and will be on campus for TWO weeks bringing excitement and energy to our school. During the Apex Fundraiser, students will be challenged to get donations to raise money for our school.

Every student at our school participates in the daily challenges and activities and enjoys classroom & school wide rewards regardless of financial participation in the fundraiser.

**SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL BY**

Making a donation online at [www.MyApexEvent.com](http://www.MyApexEvent.com)

Sending a link to invite family and friends to also donate online

Encouraging your student to raise \$30.00 and have fun in the Color Games event!

We are halfway through our Apex Color Games Fundraiser! Remember to ask your child about the daily challenges!

Thank you for all of the support so far!

**Good News**

My name is Julia Rentmeester, and I finished my 8<sup>th</sup>-grade year at Murray Middle School. After I heard that teachers were interested in an outdoor classroom, I decided to focus on that for my Girl Scout Silver Award project. The Silver Award addresses a community problem that the members help to solve.

I began by working with Mr. McKenzie and NJHS leaders to determine the level of the project. Once we decided on the courtyard, I sent out a survey to the teachers to see how they would like to see it improved. I sent donation requests for mulch and plants to local businesses, one of which was Kern Landscape Resources, which generously donated all the mulch we needed. I also reached out to the community for financial and volunteer assistance.

The community spent over 150 volunteer hours weeding, planting, and moving mulch to renovate the area. The courtyard is now a space where you can relax, read, and learn, with several sitting areas in addition to 30+ camping chairs for students and teachers to utilize. I hope that future Murray students continue to maintain and honor the space.



## Staff Spotlight



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

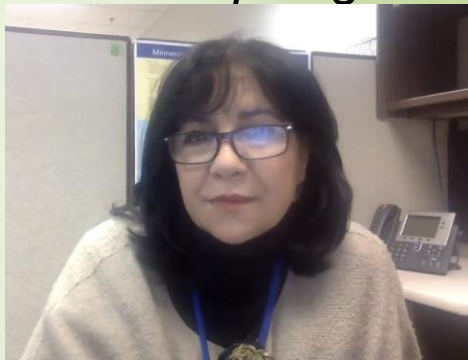
Hello, my name is Jamin McKenzie and I am the proud principal here at Murray Middle School. Welcome to a new school year, Pilots! I am in this business because I love working with kids. Seeing all of those smiles and all of that excitement as students and staff are walking in to start a new school year 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 24<sup>th</sup> year in Saint Paul Public Schools and my 13<sup>th</sup> 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 18 years old and entering college. Our family enjoys time at the family cabin and golfing together.

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 Soraya Folley, and my journey with SPPS started in 2013. I taught French Immersion social studies and French language at Hidden River Middle School for seven years. I also had the chance to witness firsthand the great work that the Office of College and Career Readiness is doing to prepare SPPS students for life after high school through the Career Pathways initiative. When the Early Childhood Hubs were launched, I had the privilege to work as an administrator alongside an amazing team whose mission is to prepare our young learners for their K-12 experience. Most recently, I taught ELL at Washington Tech. High School.

I have a BA in French from the University of Algiers, and I am a proud Saint Cloud State University alumnus with a MA in Teaching English as a Second Language and a K-12 Principal license.

I was born and raised in Algiers, Algeria, lived fifteen years in Paris, France, and now call Minnesota home after a move to the US in 2008. I am a parent to an amazing daughter who is studying in Barcelona, Spain, and needless to say that I never miss an opportunity to go see her when I get the chance.

I look forward to serving the Murray Community. I will serve Murray's students, staff, families, and stakeholders with the utmost respect, integrity, hard work, and unwavering commitment.

## 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 third 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 13<sup>th</sup> 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 (12<sup>th</sup> grade), Raymond (2<sup>nd</sup> grade), and Vivian (Kindergarten). 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!



## **Counselor Corner & Mental Health 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](mailto:justine.revermann@spps.org) – 651-243-4663 ext. 744052: Student last names A-L
- Ms. Lisa Engelstad – [lisa.engelstad@spps.org](mailto:lisa.engelstad@spps.org) – 651-243-4663 ext. 745675: 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](mailto:noah.mcgurran-hanson@spps.org) - 651-243-4663 ext. 742006
- Ms. Jessie Phillips - [jessie.phillips@spps.org](mailto:jessie.phillips@spps.org) - 651-243-4663 ext. 742394

Lastly, we have two school-based mental health therapists, Ms. Sarah Beam and Ms. Rachel Howard. Sarah works with us through our partnership with ChangeInc and Rachel works with us through LifeStance. Sarah is at Murray every day, and Rachel is at Murray most days. Their offices are in our main office, and they do their therapy sessions during the school day in the school! They both have information fliers in this newsletter. Please connect with a Murray counselor or social worker to put in a referral for your child to work with Sarah or Rachel, or to talk more about therapeutic options.



# Your Mental Health Provider



*Sarah Beam, MSW, LGSW, LADC*

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 are available via Zoom
- Services in English and Spanish

TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT YOUR  
SCHOOL-BASED THERAPIST:

**Sarah Beam**

SBeam@thechangeinc.org  
(612)-239-7127

COMMUNITY  
& SCHOOL  
COLLABORATIVE  
— A PROGRAM OF —  
**CHANGE INC.**

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  
outpatient clinic services?

Scan the QR code to learn  
more about Change Clinic:



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



## ☀ Meet Your School Therapist ☀

Here to Support Your Child's Growth & Success



Hello Parents,

My name is Rachel, and I am the school-based therapist here at Murray Middle School. I provide a safe and welcoming space where students can talk about their feelings, learn healthy ways to cope, and build confidence in themselves.

### What I Help With:

- Big feelings & stress – managing anger, sadness, or worry
- Motivation & success – helping kids believe in themselves and set goals
- Trauma support – healing from difficult or painful experiences
- Behavior & focus – improving self-control and making positive choices

### About Me:

- Experienced working with children and teens, including those in foster care





## MURRAY MIDDLE SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE



**1ST PERIOD 8:30 - 9:48**

**2ND PERIOD 9:52 - 11:10**

**3RD PERIOD 11:14 - 1:04**

**LUNCH A 11:14 - 11:41**

**LUNCH B 11:57 - 12:25**

**LUNCH C 12:32 - 1:04**

**FOUNDATIONS 1:08 - 1:38**

**4TH PERIOD 1:42 - 3:00**

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





Picture Day, simplified.

# GET READY FOR picture day!

MURRAY MIDDLE SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 24, 2025  
OCTOBER 29, 2025 - RETAKE



## TO-DO'S:



Mark your  
calendar



Plan your  
outfit & hairstyle



### Please, don't wear green.

Our green screen lets you choose your background when you order your photos, but it also makes green clothes disappear.

## What's next?

A few days after picture day, you'll be able to customize and order your photos online at [shop.jostenspix.com](https://shop.jostenspix.com) — and photos will be shipped directly to your home.

**YOUR EVENT CODE IS: FE33325**





# 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.



# 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

S

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.

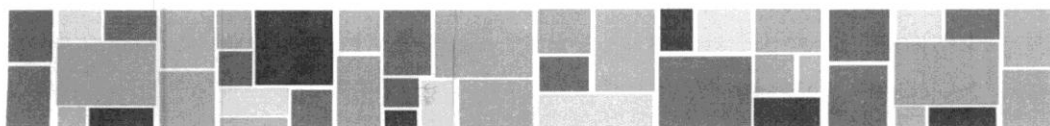
Infinite  
Campus

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**

