

Scholar Handbook

SCHOOL COLORS

BLUE and WHITE

SCHOOL MASCOT

Mighty Mustangs

HOUSE COLORS

BLUE, RED, GREEN, and BLACK

Sharon Randall, Principal
Stephanie Spann, 6th Grade Assistant Principal
Kim Witherspoon, 7th Grade Assistant Principal
Raynard Singleton, 8th Grade Assistant Principal

Vision:

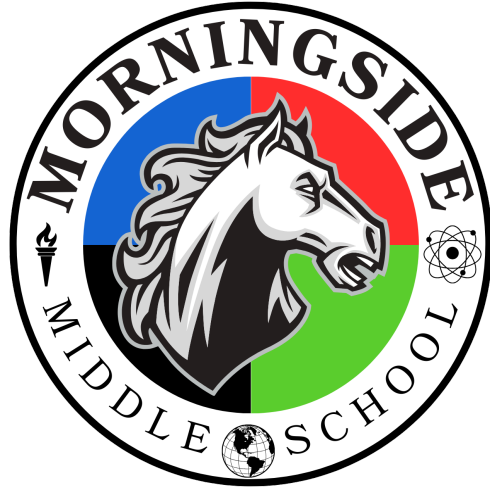
Morningside Middle School is a place where all stakeholders feel safe, valued, and inspired to achieve personal and academic excellence; a place where diversity is embraced.



Mission:

Through dedication and a commitment to a growth mindset, we will support scholars, families, and communities socially, emotionally, and academically with excellence.





As an MMS Mustang, I show...

Proactivity

Respect

Integrity

Determination


Empathy



MUSTANG HOUSE MATRIX

Purpose: To foster our skills so that we are respectful, responsible, productive, and professional members of our Mustang community.

OUR HOUSE, OUR HERD, OUR EXPECTATIONS MATRIX

	H HALLWAYS	O OUTSTANDING CLASSROOMS	U UPBEAT CAFETERIA	S SANITIZED RESTROOMS	E EXCELLENT BUSES
P PROACTIVE	Line up and stay to the right Transition Quickly	Have all materials when you enter the room Read and listen to all directions before a task	Quickly find a seat and begin eating. Have all utensils and items before sitting.	Always have a pass to go to the restroom Clean up after yourself Use restroom at the allotted time	Be at the bus stop 10 minutes early with a clear backpack Remind friends to keep the bus clean
R RESPECT	Use hands and feet appropriately Voice level 1, appropriate language and tone	Use appropriate language, voice level, and hand signals at all times	Use hands for selecting food, inputting numbers, and eating	Use only the time that you need Keep your hands to yourself Only one person per stall	Use appropriate language Voice level 1 Keep hands, feet and all objects to yourself
I INTEGRITY	Go where you are sent Check into class and get a pass before moving	Use technology and materials appropriately Stay in assigned area and on task	Ask for what you want Stay in designated area	Throw trash in the trash can Only flush toilet paper	Remain in assigned seat Only ride approved bus
D DETERMINATION	Use walking feet to move quickly to your destination	Be alert and engaged Give 100% effort 100% of the time	Walk in the cafeteria Quickly choose your meal	Use restroom and exit quickly. Go directly back to class	Wait patiently to enter the bus Stay seated the entire ride
E EMPATHY	Line up and wait patiently at the water fountain Greet others in the hallway appropriately	Use kind words Conflict is inevitable, combat is a choice Every student has the right to learn	Use manners when speaking to others	Keep restrooms clean Flush toilet after each use	Treat others the way you want to be treated Listen to and obey directions given by driver.



I will show Respect for...

Myself by:

- Attending school regularly and being on time.
- Following rules and directions of adults.
- Trying my best to complete my school work.
- Exhibiting impulse control and controlling my behavior.
- Remaining on school grounds unless I have permission to leave school.
- Accepting consequences for my actions.
- Choosing not to bring inappropriate or unlawful items to school.

Others by:

- Showing empathy when speaking to others and behaving towards others.
- Treating others as I would like to be treated.
- Saying positive things to others.
- Being honest.
- Cooperating with others.
- Dressing in a way that is appropriate for the learning environment.
- Using language that is appropriate for school.
- Using problem-solving and anger management skills to solve problems peacefully.
- Staying out of others' personal business.
- Staying out of others' personal space.

Learning by:

- Cooperating with others.
- Behaving in a way that helps others and me.
- Working quietly.
- Staying in my assigned area.
- Keeping focused on my work.
- Following school rules and procedures.
- Participating in class activities and discussions.
- Completing my own school work and homework.
- Following rules and directions of adults.
- Keeping my eyes on my own paper when taking quizzes and tests.

Property by:

- Taking care of things in my school.
- Leaving dangerous or distracting things at home.
- Using school materials for their intended purposes.
- Following the rules about safety.



MMS House System

Morningside Middle School adopted the Ron Clark Academy House System because it is a dynamic, exciting, and proven way to create a positive climate and culture for students and staff. Houses make up smaller communities within each school, and all staff and students belong to one, so everyone feels a sense of membership at school. The House System offers opportunities for...

- Healthy Competition
- Comradery
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Connection

Through the House System, we celebrate and encourage each other. Although we have four Houses, Morningside is first one **family!**

Here's a quick introduction to our Houses.

ALTRUISMO[®]

Altruismo traces its origins to the rainforests of the Amazon, where a group of powerful Brazilians were given the name because of the Portuguese meaning behind it: **“the Givers.”**

This group balances boldness and altruism—empowering others rather than self-interest. They value lifting others while maintaining competitiveness and pride. Known for smart, driven students, they are highly involved in school. Altruismo prides itself on cultivating leadership and inspiring new members to uphold this legacy.

AMISTAD[®]

Amistad is the House that originates from Mexico. A group of kind but powerful individuals that are known most for their unconquered spirit. This is why, in the language of their ancestry, their name means **“friendship.”**

Incoming members vary widely — our students can be very smart, creative, friendly, and competitive; Amistad is highly diverse! The House draws inspiration from its animal symbol, the peacock, reminding members that the fighting spirit of an Amistadian never dies. Members are encouraged to self-reflect, as we believe ‘Once the peacock finds its feathers, it discovers who it really is.’ The goal is for each student to find their feathers and step into their greatness. Some may lack confidence at first but will learn to embrace their authentic selves and develop their talents and virtues. Achieving this milestone can earn a student the House's highest honor, knighthood, turning them into fierce warriors, protectors, and guardians of friendship.



ISIBINDI

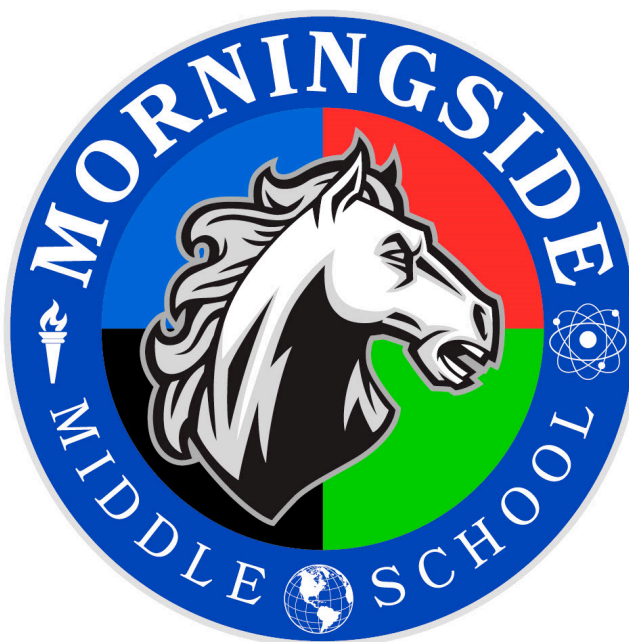
Isibindi is a close-knit group, like a pride of lions, where family is central. Its symbolic animals, the mute swan and lion, empower new members. Initially quiet or shy, students grow to show strength and bravery over time. In the African Zulu language, Isibindi means “**courage**.”

It is a House that inherits the legend and influence of both Shaka Zulu, the king of the Zulu kingdom, and Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa. It is a House that knows when to be strategic and creative, or when to pull back and be reserved, but also when to go full force with power and strength. This is why Isibindi welcomes creative and quiet kids and turns them into leaders over time. They learn that, like the mute swan, their quiet creativity can be harnessed to speak volumes in its own way.

RÊVEUR

Rêveur is a royal House whose name in French means “**dreamers**” — because its members are students full of freedom and wild abandon who pursue their dreams without obstacles. The unicorn at the crest's center symbolizes this, as a powerful, nearly untamable creature.

The House of Rêveur is a passionate and ambitious House, inspired by wolves known for strength, resilience, and loyalty. Members, initially fearful of pursuing dreams, quickly learn confidence and rely on their pack for support. Rêveurians believe the House's strength lies in the hearts and efforts of its members, who work together, being adaptable and resourceful to achieve their goals.



SCHOOL BUSINESS

SCHOOL HOURS

Morningside's school hours are 8:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. In the mornings, the front doors will open at 8:00 a.m. to allow students to enter the building. Students will be served breakfast beginning at 8:00 a.m. In the afternoons, all students must be off campus by 3:45 p.m. unless they are involved in after-school or extracurricular activities. Scholars are not allowed to be on campus until 7:45 a.m.

DAILY DISMISSAL

Students are expected to leave campus by 3:45 p.m. unless under the direct supervision of a teacher, coach, or administrator. Students may not return to campus after dismissal unless they are participating in an authorized school function. All transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the students and their parents and must be made before the end of the school day. Failure to do so will result in administrative action.

SIGNING OUT

1. To receive a day's credit for being present in class, a student must be present for at least two-thirds of the class period.
2. Students are permitted to leave school before their regular dismissal with the written request of a parent or guardian. Early dismissals must be obtained through the secretary in the main office. In order to leave the school building, a parent note must be uploaded to ParentPortal. The main office must be given a telephone number where the parent can be reached.
3. Students may not be signed out after 2:45 pm.
4. Students must also sign back in at the main office if they return to school.
5. Only those individuals listed on the student's emergency card can sign the student out. No emails, phone calls, or faxes will be accepted.

Attendance Policy

A student's regular attendance at school is critical to academic success. While a student may receive make-up work and notes from other students, nothing can replace the interaction between student and teacher in the classroom. All absences are defined as lawful or unlawful. Students having a lawful absence shall be permitted to make up work missed during the absence. Absences determined as unlawful will not entitle a student to make up work missed during the absence. Principals may use discretion in permitting students to make up. Students should not miss more than five (5) school days per semester. Truancy identification and procedures can begin as soon as three (3) unlawful absences.



Written Excuses

Parents are required to upload parent notes in ParentPortal. Only medical and legal notes/excuses must be sent to the school. Failure to bring a note upon return will result in the absence being categorized as unlawful/unexcused. Excused absences include being sick, going to court, or having a serious family emergency (with documentation). Students can only use a parent excuse note for a total of ten (10) days; after the 10th absence, the student will need a doctor's excuse or other official documentation.

An **excused lawful absence** permits a student to make up missed work promptly. Any absence determined to be unexcused does not entitle a student to make up the work missed during the absence.

Academics

Grading Structure

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	0 - 59

Students and families can monitor grades and attendance on demand through Parent Portal/PowerSchool. Please contact the school if you need assistance with a username and password.

MMS Expectations for High School Readiness

Grades: We challenge students to earn grades of 80 and higher. Earning A's and B's will help students be prepared to succeed in high school and beyond.

SC Ready/SC PASS: Students should aim for scores that earn "Meets" or "Exceeds" on subject area tests.

Other assessments: Students should always do their best work and earn the highest marks possible. Teachers will conference with students regularly to discuss their progress towards demonstrating mastery of the content tested.

Students are encouraged to take courses such as AVID and honors courses. Middle school students can take high school credit courses if they qualify for enrollment. Taking the most rigorous courses appropriate for the student will help them prepare for high school and beyond. Please note that some courses have enrollment requirements, such as teacher recommendation, grades, and/or test scores. Talk to our school counselor and teachers for more information about these opportunities.

Promotion Criteria

To be promoted to the next grade, students must earn a final grade of 60 or higher in all content classes.



Report Cards and Progress Reports

Progress reports and report cards are each issued four times during the school year. Teachers will also use other forms of reporting a student's progress.

Honor Roll

The following criteria determine honor roll students:

- Honor rolls will be based on nine-week grades.
- **The Principal's Honor Roll** requires a 90 or above in **all** classes for the nine weeks.
- **A/B Honor Roll** requires an 80 or higher in **all** classes for the nine weeks.

Special Recognition

Students are recognized by their classroom teachers for academic success every nine weeks. Student achievement is celebrated on our website, social media, and in our building.

Work Ethic and Additional Support

We expect that MMS scholars will do their best work on every assignment. Not doing work or doing poor-quality work is **not** okay or acceptable.

High School Credit Course Offerings

At the time of the printing of this handbook, Morningside Middle School currently offers the following classes for high school credit for qualified students:

- English 1
- Geometry
- Foundations of Computers

Students can qualify for classes based on iReady scores, ELA/Math course grades, and teacher recommendations. Students preparing to take high school credit courses should take Honors and/or advanced-level courses in sixth and seventh grades. The AVID elective class is also recommended for scholars enrolled in or preparing to enroll in high school credit courses.

Honors Classes

Students are placed in Honors classes based on iReady scores, ELA/Math course grades, and teacher recommendations.

MORNINGSIDE SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS

1. Scholars are expected to be on time and prepared for class.
2. Scholars must have a pass to leave any class.
3. Scholars will keep their hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
4. Scholars will follow the directions of adults.
5. Scholars will follow the dress code policy.
6. Scholars will not be allowed to disrupt the learning process and environment of others.
7. Scholars will follow the Charleston County Code of Conduct.



Tardy Policy

	Consequence
1st Unexcused Tardy	Verbal Warning
2nd Unexcused Tardy	Parent Contact
3rd Unexcused Tardy	Lunch Detention
4th Unexcused Tardy	Teacher-managed Referral

After the 4th unexcused tardy, office-managed referrals will be written for each additional tardy. Tardy counts restart every quarter.

The MMS faculty is committed to high-quality instruction. Late arrivals disrupt learning for everyone and reflect a lack of self-discipline.

Please note that reasons such as morning traffic, oversleeping, or transporting siblings are not excused tardies. Only doctor appointments, court appearances, and bereavements are valid excuses; students must provide proper documentation to the attendance office.

Parents must sign in late arrivals (after 8:45 AM) students. Students arriving late without an authorized pass will be considered tardy and escorted by the grade-level student concern specialist, facing consequences according to the MMS Tardy Policy.

Discussing the importance of punctuality with your children is crucial. Our mission is to develop responsible, lifelong learners. Please encourage them to arrive on time, prepared, and ready to learn.

- **Internet Use/Acceptable Use Policy:** Use of technology at school is a privilege. The use of the school's/district's computer network must be in support of education and research that is consistent with the mission of the school and district. Each scholar who wants to utilize technology, the internet, etc., must read and agree to the terms of the CCSD's Technology Acceptable Use Policy as outlined in the CCSD Student Code of Conduct.

- ☒ **Cell Phone Usage:**

Cell phones are not to be used during the school day. The school has a no cell phone policy to improve focus and academic achievement. Morningside is a Yondr school, and students are given Yondr pouches at the start of the year to lock their phones until dismissal. Phones/pouches are to be left in the student's homeroom. Phones not in pouches will be confiscated and secured in the front office until the end of the day. Repeat offenses will require parent retrieval. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged phones or any personal devices, and students should store them properly in the Yondr.

Violating the policy or participating in any form of cyberbullying can result in consequences imposed by the administration per the CCSD Progressive Discipline Plan.



The following items should not be brought to school. School officials will confiscate these items.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cigarettes (e-cigs) and/or lighters/matches o Drugs (street and/or over-the-counter) o Electronic games o Fireworks o Food (including gum, candy, etc.) o Games (including playing cards) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Magazines (at the discretion of teachers and administrators) o Pornographic material o Tobacco products o Weapons o Materials used for gambling o Gang paraphernalia o Any other items deemed distracting by administrators |
|--|---|

SLT (Silent Lunch Time)

If the student's behavior is the cause of needing lunch detention, the teacher should document this in SimplDiscipline with this consequence (teacher-managed referral). The teacher is also expected to contact the parent to inform them of the behavior and the consequence. If the student does not attend the lunch detention, the teacher should write an administrative referral for Detention Violation.

STUDENT BEHAVIORS POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

When students behave in positive ways, they will be successful. Students are responsible for treating each other fairly and for acting in compliance with school policies and directions from school staff.

Since students spend the majority of their time in classroom environments where behavior must conform to high standards, most discipline matters are managed by the classroom teacher.

Behaviors resulting in Disruptive or Criminal Conduct are managed by the school administration through an office referral. Interventions and consequences are based on the severity of the infraction as addressed in Levels 2 and 3. Any one of the consequences listed under each level, pertaining to the incident, may be implemented by the administrator.

The CCSD Code of Conduct applies to all students at all times while:

- In school buildings
- On school grounds
- On school vehicles (buses and bus stops)
- At all school-related activities

If students do not behave in positive ways, consequences will follow.

CCSD PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN

The CCSD Progressive Discipline Plan is a guide for all administrators to use when processing office discipline referrals. Administrators may elect to provide additional interventions or assign a lesser consequence based on extenuating circumstances. In addition, administrators may assign a more exclusionary practice with approval from the principal.



The infraction title and codes listed in the CCSD Progressive Discipline Plan are assigned by the state. The majority of the behavior levels are directed by the state; however, behaviors considered more egregious towards adults may have been placed in a higher level (for example, profanity towards a student is a Level 1 offense based on the state's code, but profanity towards an adult is considered a Level 2 infraction for CCSD). For more information on codes, infractions, their definitions, and possible consequences, please refer to pages 30-38 in the CCSD Student Code of Conduct.

Bullying/Harassment Policy

CCSD Schools adhere to a 3 Level Offense and Action System. **Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Sexual Harassment** are considered **Level 3** offenses, the most serious of offenses. Level 3 offenses are automatically treated as **Criminal Conduct**, which means they significantly disrupt the learning environment or pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of oneself or others. These activities require administrative action and may require action by law enforcement, the Department of School Support, or the Associate Superintendent. **Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Sexual Harassment** will not be tolerated. If you feel you have been a victim, you must report the incident immediately so the school administration can take action. Please see your 'Student Code of Conduct' for a detailed explanation of the Level 3 Offense and Action System.

Bullying is defined as an unwanted, aggressive, deliberate, and repeated act with the intention to hurt, insult or threaten another person in school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school events. Bullying consists of an imbalance of power when the person(s) doing the bullying has more physical, emotional, or social power than the target. Bullying may include:

- Saying mean or hurtful things to someone, making fun of someone, or calling someone mean or hurtful names
- Completely ignoring or excluding someone from their group or other activities on purpose
- Hitting, kicking, shoving, or restricting movement
- Telling lies or spreading rumors about someone
- Sending mean notes (on paper or electronically)
- Trying to make other students dislike someone and doing other hurtful things

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices such as cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, text, apps, social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, or false, content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else, causing embarrassment or humiliation. Cyberbullying may include:

- Repeatedly sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages.
- Distributing information about another that is derogatory or untrue through social media postings or any other digital method.
- Online "fighting" using electronic messages with angry, vulgar language
- Breaking into an email or social networking account and using one's online identity to send vicious or embarrassing material.



- Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information, or tricking them into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, and forwarding it to others.
- Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or are highly intimidating, or engaging in online activities that make a person afraid for their safety; cyberstalking.

Assistance for Bullying

If you are being bullied, harassed, or intimidated:

- Tell someone you trust – a parent/guardian, a teacher, a counselor, or an administrator.
- Calmly tell the student to stop or say nothing and walk away.
- Try to avoid situations where bullying is likely to happen.
- If you know someone who is being bullied, harassed, or intimidated:
 - Tell someone you trust – a parent/guardian, a teacher, a counselor, or an administrator.
 - Don't encourage the bully by laughing or joining in.
 - Encourage the bullied student to talk to someone they trust about what happened.

Engaging in these behaviors or any online activities intended to harm another person (physically or emotionally) will result in disciplinary action. In some cases, cyberbullying may be considered a crime.

MORNINGSIDE MIDDLE DRESS CODE

The dress code creates a respectful and safe environment. Students are responsible for dressing appropriately at all times while on a school campus or while involved in a school or district-sponsored event/activity. Wearing appropriate attire promotes a positive influence on the school climate.

Uniform Policy

The Dress Code at Morningside is about SAFETY and SELF-RESPECT. Uniforms allow us to identify any visitor or trespasser very quickly. Additionally, uniforms help create an environment of professionalism and respect in preparation for an education and eventually a career.

Grade Level	Shirt Color	Pants
6 th Grade	Blue	Blue, Black, Khaki, or Jeans (without holes that expose skin)
7 th Grade	Green	Blue, Black, Khaki, or Jeans (without holes that expose skin)
8 th Grade	Gray	Blue, Black, Khaki, or Jeans (without holes that expose skin)

- **Pants:** Scholars may wear short or long cotton/polyester pants – **Khaki, black, blue, or jeans without holes that show skin.**

Note: The pants should fit: not too big; not too tight. NO jeans with holes that expose skin, spandex, leggings, jeggings, sweatpants, etc. "Pants-sagging" is not acceptable.

- **Shorts:** The standard for wearing shorts is that when standing with arms hanging down to the side, the area on the leg where fingers touch should be the hemline of the shorts. Young ladies may wear "skorts", but they must be the appropriate length.



- **Shirts:** You may wear a T-shirt, House shirt (HOUSE DAYS), golf shirt, collared shirt, or turtleneck. No shirts with spaghetti straps or low cut necklines will be allowed. Keep your shirt neatly tucked into your pants. Undergarments worn under the shirts must be white or the appropriate grade level color.
- **Shoes:** Shoes should be securely fastened to your feet. Gladiator sandals or sandals with the back or toes out are prohibited. Slides, bedroom slippers, slip-on shoes, and thong flip-flops are not allowed. Crocs with straps are allowed.
- **Sweatshirts/Sweaters:** Wear the appropriate solid color for your grade level. They can be pulled over, zip-up, button-up, and short-sleeved or long-sleeved. **Hooded sweatshirts are not to be worn after 8:30 AM.**
- **Jackets:** Unless instructed otherwise, leave your jacket, coat, or windbreaker in your homeroom. If you are cold, wear an **appropriate** sweatshirt. Jackets **MAY NOT** be worn around the waist.
- **Miscellaneous:** Hats, scarves, etc., will not be worn during the school day. Scarves, bandanas (of any kind) are not allowed at school. (Safety) Scholars should not display combs, brushes. Book bags and backpacks should be placed in lockers at the beginning of the school day.
- **Jewelry:** Anything distracting should not be brought to school, including large/flashy jewelry of any type, facial piercings, and anything drug/gang/violence-related.
- ☒ **For Health and Safety Reasons, the following items are FORBIDDEN:**
 - Face jewelry (facial piercing, “grills” or other dental coverings unless prescribed by a doctor)
 - Hoop earrings (larger than a quarter)
 - Dangle earrings (longer than one inch)
 - Oversized belt buckles
 - Scarves, bandanas, hats, wave caps, sweat bands, head bands
 - Oversized bags or purses
 - Hats worn during the school day without permission will be confiscated

NOTE: Administration has the discretion to determine appropriate or inappropriate attire. Students who are found to be in violation of the dress code are subject to disciplinary action.

Appropriate dress, appearance, proper behavior, and cleanliness are vital to each member of the school community. For this reason, young people enrolled at MMS are to strive to be neat, clean, and professional in their dress.



Grade Level Teams

Sixth Grade Teams			Seventh Grade Teams		
Laura	Rotonda	Counselor	Chelsea	Sewell	Counselor
Collin	Sitton	Science	Jennifer	Thompson	Science
Jimmie	Bromell	Math	Vanessa	Senior	Math
Rochelle	Green	Social Studies	Shanard	Deas	Social Studies
Kendrick	Brown	ELA	Domonique	Thompson	ELA
Malcolm	Jones	Science	Reagan	Eppes	Science
Megan	Frick	Math	Richelle	Gilchrist	Math
William	Freeman	Social Studies	Denicsha	Bennamon	Social Studies
Latoya	Burrows	ELA	Bari	White	ELA

Eighth Grade Teams		
Toni	Linnen	Counselor
Sheila	Brock	Science
Jayanna	Smith	Math
Lekisha	Jones	Social Studies
Vintosha	Eldridge	ELA
Amanda	Duca	Science
Latoya	Dent	Math
Jesse	Murray	Social Studies
Cynthia	Williams	ELA

