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Our people making the difference.

A National *Race to the Top* District.

Member of "League of Innovative Schools"

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August 2026

Dear Middletown High School Families,

We hope you and your families have enjoyed a wonderful and refreshing summer break! As we prepare to launch a new academic year, our staff is excited to welcome back our returning scholars and extend a warm greeting to the new faces joining the MHS community. We can't wait to foster growth, excellence, and leadership in every scholar this school year.

To ensure every scholar gets off to a strong and confident start, Middletown High School will continue its practice of utilizing a **staggered start schedule** on **September 3rd and 4th**. This phased approach is a thoughtful, district-wide strategy designed to provide a calm and focused transition into the new academic year. Implementing this schedule allows us to:

- **Empower the 9th Grade Transition:** Moving into high school is a major milestone. A dedicated day allows our newest cohort to receive individual attention as they locate classrooms, meet teachers, and learn to navigate their schedules while "thinking win-win" and building positive connections.
- **Inspire Leadership for Upperclassmen:** Staggering the start ensures our returning scholars in the 2023, 2024, and 2025 cohorts receive focused support to "begin with the end in mind," setting their own path for success through targeted asynchronous activities designed to help them find their voice.

Opening Days Schedule

Thursday, September 3rd

- **In-Person Learning:** Only incoming **9th-grade scholars (Cohort 2026)** report to the building. This dedicated day allows us to focus our full attention on our newest cohort as they transition into high school life.
- **Asynchronous Learning:** Scholars in all other cohorts (**2023, 2024, and 2025**) will not report to campus. They are expected to work from home on goal-setting activities and surveys. Please look for an email from your cohort principal with specific details and links.

Friday, September 4th

- **In-Person Learning: All MHS scholars** across all grade levels (Cohorts 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026) report to school in person for a full day of learning and community building.

Creating a safe, predictable, and supportive environment at the start sets the foundation for our scholars to find their voice and lead their own learning throughout the entire year.

Thursday, September 3rd, 2026 **In Person ONLY:** Cohort 2026 (Grade 9) Asynchronous: Cohort 2025 (Grade 10), Cohort 2024 (Grade 11), Cohort 2023 (Grade 12)	
6:50 - 7:25 AM	Scholars arrive through the cafeteria doors for security checks and breakfast
7:35 - 8:25	2026 Cohort Assembly in the Auditorium
8:35 - 9:13	Period 1
9:17 - 9:50	Period 2
9:54 - 10:27	Period 3
10:31 - 11:04	Period 4
11:08 - 11:41	Period 5
11:45 - 12:18	Period 6
12:22 - 12:55	Period 7
12:59 - 1:37	Period 8
1:41 - 2:17	Period 9
Dismissal 2:17 - 2:20	

A Few Things to Note:

- BOCES scholars will get a **Z-Day** pass on **Thursday, September 3rd**. BOCES will run on a regular schedule on **Friday, September 4th**.
- **Cell Phone-Free Spaces (Yondr):** We will continue to support our cell phone-free spaces with our Yondr program. This practice—now reinforced by new New York State Education Department legislation—aligns with what we already know: that less screen time during the day means more engagement and stronger peer connections. Scholars should bring their *working* Yondr pouches on the first day; those without one will have their phones collected by Administration during arrival.
- **District-Issued Technology Only:** iPads are not permitted in the building. Scholars may only utilize district-issued devices for academic work.
- **Enhanced Safety & Arrival Protocols:** Safety remains a top priority. Our enhanced morning arrival procedures maximize safety and efficiency. All scholars and bags will pass through detector screenings upon entering the cafeteria doors each morning.
- **Beverage Container Policy:** To streamline our morning entrance checks, only **clear plastic water bottles** are allowed in school. Stainless steel or non-see-through metal tumblers/mugs cannot be brought into the building.
- **Student ID Cards:** All scholars will receive new ID cards for the 2026-2027 school year. The expectation for all scholars at Middletown High School is that these are worn throughout the day, every day.
- **Counseling, Transportation, and Parent Portal**

- **Counseling:** Guidance counselors return to MHS on Tuesday, August 25th. Please look for information to sign up for a ***virtual*** session for schedule support.
- **Bus Information:** Route details are available through the Parent and Student Portal.
- **Technical Support:** If you have issues with the portal, please contact **parent.portal@ecsdm.org**.

Middletown High School has always been a place where we believe in providing all of our scholars rich learning experiences and opportunities, and we're honored to continue that tradition with all of you as we support our scholars in their legacy making journeys. If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to a member of the administrative team. We are here to support you and ensure this year is a great success for all our scholars. Thank you for your partnership as we support our scholars in their legacy-making journeys. We look forward to seeing our leaders very soon. Here's to a year filled with learning, growth, and pride in being part of the Middletown High School family!

Middletown High School		
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MIDDIE PRIDE!!!



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