

# Mustang Parent Information Guide, Spring 2019

## Volume I I

### Special points of interest:

- Summer Camp and Happenings
- Transportation Procedures
- Your Class Schedule and Instructional Levels
- Gradebook and Listserv Information

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## Welcome and Purpose... Mr. Lewis Blessing, Principal

Welcome to one of the greatest experiences your child is going to have in his/her lifetime, the progression to middle school.

Many parents remember this experience fondly, while others get very nervous and edgy at just the thought of their student moving from the small, family environment of elementary school to the bold and quite larger experience of middle school. Despite our personal feelings and memories, your student's secondary school experience begins in just a few short months.

For this reason, we have cre-

ated a "Montford Parent Instructional Guide" to provide you with answers to some of the questions which might have arisen about middle school. We have followed up with subsequent parent meetings for you to ask questions and receive answers about secondary school, our educational goals, and some of the policies and procedures which are in place at Montford Middle School.

This middle school "Owners Manual" is meant to be informative and comprehensive so parents may find answers quickly. This guide will remain published on our

school website throughout the year so you may reference at your convenience.

While we realize that we cannot possibly answer each and every question in this publication or in our subsequent meetings, we have hopefully given you the name of a contact to whom a question may be addressed throughout the summer and the following school year as they might arise.

Visit our website at [www.leonschools.net/montford](http://www.leonschools.net/montford) anytime and sign up for our Listserv.

## Our Mission at Montford

Our mission at William J. Montford, III Middle School is to establish a culture of respect and responsibility; engage students in an active, emotionally and physically safe learning environment; model enthusiasm and love for learning; and prepare students to contribute to and care for the community and the environment by providing opportunities to explore interests and creatively solve problems.

## Leon County Schools Mission Statement

The mission of the Leon County Schools is to prepare students to become responsible, respectful and independent learners and contributing citizens in a diverse world of change. The district will facilitate student growth by creating a quality, caring, and safe learning environment, and selecting and developing quality teachers, administrators, and staff.

The district will provide effective and efficient school, district, and community support services that address student and school performance improvements. Schools and the district will communicate with and involve parents/guardians, business and the community in activities that celebrate and enhance student and school success.



## Summer Happenings

While most people are off enjoying the spoils of a summer break, a great deal of activity is taking place at Montford Middle School. While our administrative team makes calendar plans for the coming year, our curriculum people are busily working on the master schedule for our students for the upcoming school year. This is why in the summer it is important to receive information from you

regarding your electives, class levels, and other information. This is used to plan our master schedule with the least amount of conflicts.

As we approach August, our summer camps kick into gear and our campus begins to stir with the students and teachers who are preparing for the coming year. Don't forget our incoming "Making of a Mustang" summer camp.



## "Making of A Mustang" Summer Camp

Our "Making Of A Mustang" Summer Camp is enjoying a eighth year on our campus. This fee based camp will assist incoming 6th graders in transitioning to our middle school community by helping them build relationships with their peers, instructors, and administration of the school prior to our actual opening of the

school year. Attending this camp permits the student to avoid the first day jitters which accompany most students on their initial arrival to middle school. Camp exposes them to many of the rituals of school during an abbreviated summer program. Students will experience a day in the life of a typical 6th grade student,

and gain tech savvy techniques which they can use toward their success in middle school. Registration is limited to 100, so get your \$100 fee and registration information completed and sent in to MMS very soon. The camp is scheduled from 8:30-12:00 from Monday-Thursday two weeks prior to the start of school.

## Montford School Hours & Morning/Afterschool Programs

Montford's school day is from 9:30A.M.-3:50.P.M. Our campus is open to students at 8:45 A.M. and closes at 4:20 P.M., unless you are participating in a sport or other special activity.

Parents who must drop off at an earlier start time may enroll their student in our fee based morning program which is operated from 7:45-9:00 A.M. each morning. Fee based students will be exposed to organized activities, homework assistance, and some extended classroom help as part of this program.

No student should arrive on the MMS campus prior to 8:45 A.M. unless they are enrolled in the morning program or have a pass from a teacher.

MMS is also proud to offer an *After-School Mustangs Program (AMP)* for your student. The After School program offers activities such as Sports and Fitness, Arts and Crafts, Music, Movies, Mind & Board Games, Technology and a Homework/Study Skills center. AMP's hours are 4:00 P.M. until 6:00 P.M. Payments are \$130 per session.

## Where Do I Go Upon Arrival

Upon arrival to school at 8:45 A.M. or later, students are located in the following places:

### 6th Graders

Report to the gym until the first bell rings at 9:23 A.M. Students wanting to enjoy breakfast will be dismissed to the cafeteria at 9:10 A.M. for breakfast.

### 7th and 8th Graders

These students are housed in the cafeteria beginning at 8:45 A.M. until the first bell rings at 9:21 A.M.

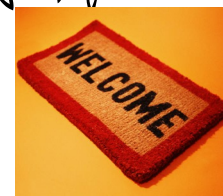
### Listserv

Please remember to go to the MMS website to join the MMS Listserv and receive weekly updates during the school year about upcoming activities of interest at Montford Middle School.

Additionally, we ask our parents to visit the Montford

website periodically for updates about the school and any additional information they might need about our school and its operation.

[Www.leonschools.net/montford](http://www.leonschools.net/montford)



### Parent Pick Up, Traffic, and Transportation Safety

We consider the safety of our students to be paramount whether they are on campus, or arriving and departing school each day.

Parent pick up is located on the south end of the MMS campus facing Roberts Elementary School. This is the lot where parents may drop off students from 8:45-9:30 A.M. each day and pick up their student from 3:50—4:20 P.M.

Students walking or riding a bike should use the design-

ated cross walks and entrances to the campus.

The western area of the school is our bus ramp. It cannot be utilized for parent pick up or drop off due to buses. More than half of our students arrive by bus to school. The bus schedule for each school, routes, times, etc. will be published in the newspaper prior to the start of the school year.

The district recommends students arrive in the morning at their bus stop at least

7-10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time.

The school bus is considered a part of the school and thus all school rules apply in regards to behavior. Riding the bus is a privilege which can be forfeited should a student's behavior warrant such action.

**Please remember to pay close attention to all traffic laws, school zones, and crossing guards when approaching the school**

### Passing Time and Lockers

Montford Middle School provides 5 minutes of passing time between each class period. MMS provides a locker for each student located in the approximate area of their homeroom class. Students need to learn and develop procedures to visit their locker for upcoming courses without being late to their next class.

Students may bring book bags to school, and carry them home; however, book-bags are not permitted in classrooms and must be

secured at all times in a student's locker.

Students enrolled in Physical Education will be assigned an additional locker in the gym to secure their clothes during their P.E. class.

All locks are provided by MMS, no fee. Unauthorized locks will be removed. All lockers are property of the school and may be searched at any time by school personnel. The school provides a locker clean out day each semester.

### Guidance

Our guidance department supplies an array of services to our MMS families from organizing parent-teacher conferences to disaster relief for a family from our community. If the MMS guidance department cannot help you themselves, they can certainly direct you and provide a referral to an outside agency for support.

### Food Services at Montford

Montford Middle School happily serves both breakfast and lunch for all our students on a daily basis. The cost of breakfast is \$1.00 and a hot lunch is \$2.25. Being a secondary school, the cafeteria will offer at least two choices on the hot lunch line. Of course, students may bring their lunch if they desire.

Students may apply for a free or reduced lunch based upon need at the start of each school year.

Parents are asked to place money in their student's account by visiting

the school cafeteria before 10:00 A.M. in the morning, or using the district lunch payment site located on the district web site. No money will be accepted by the cashiers from students during lunch or outside the specified hours for depositing money.

Students attend lunch based upon the building where they are located during their third period class. The duration of lunch is 25 minutes.

### Media Center

The MMS Media Center is truly an instructional resource center upon which the foundation of our school is built. While housing our extensive collection of books, it also has the latest technology available for students. Besides having 25 computers, our Media Center has a state of the art video production lab, a maker space room and houses our technology offices. The Media Center is open from 9:00am– 4:15pm. Our Media Center also conducts a book fair each semester where our students may purchase books and other instructional items for their personal consumption.

### Clubs

One of the easiest ways to get to know other students in your middle school is to get involved in an activity or club at your school.

Montford offers a variety of service clubs and organizations to meet the interest and needs of our students. There are clubs such as Jr.

Beta and Math Competition Teams, which are based upon academic achievement, to clubs based upon a common interest such as the Chess Club.

In addition, many of our elective classes have an after-school program or requirement. Band, Chorus, Orches-

tra, and Drama have students participating beyond the school day in practice and activities. This enhances their academic interest and performance.

Get involved, get busy, and add to your enjoyment of being an MMS student!



### Middle School Sports

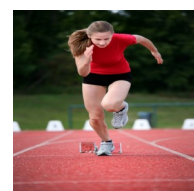
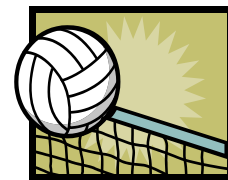
Montford Middle School joins our sister schools in the district by offering a well rounded selection of sports.

The MMS sports program is competitive in nature and try-outs are held approximately two weeks before the competitive season begins.

Participation in any sport is based upon a competitive selection to the team, maintaining a 2.0 grade point average, and proper conduct. Practice for most sporting activities oc-

curs before or after school and games are held on week nights during the allotted season.

All middle school competitions are conducted against the other middle schools in our public school district. Competitions are held on a home and away basis or on a designated neutral location or high school. All grade levels are eligible to try out for any team.



### Levels of Instruction

All academic classes at Montford Middle School are offered at specific instructional levels based upon the annual FSA examination and prior performance. Students who have a gifted EP on file may enroll in Gifted-courses in language arts, math, science, and social studies.

Students scoring in the bottom 25% will be assigned general level courses, but

will also be required to enroll in an intensive course of instruction in reading and math for additional support.

Intensive classes will replace an elective in their schedule, thus reducing a student's number of elective options. This is the reason we place importance upon striving to do our best on all assessments.

Regardless of the classes

level of instruction, at least 70% of the grade in each class is based upon assessment.



### Your Class Schedule

Your schedule is a combination of the levels of instruction warranted by your prior achievement and the items you have chosen for your elective choices.

Your prior year's grades, prognosis testing, combined with your FSA achievement levels determine your levels of instruction. Confirmation of your course requests will be sent home.

MMS builds a new master schedule each year designed around the requests of their students. For this reason, we honor our course requests to the best of our ability and do not make changes to your schedule unless there is a documented and justified reason. We do not permit students to change schedules

due to:

- Change of mind about elective
- Like or dislike for the instructor
- Friends in or (not in) classes
- Time lunch is offered
- Location of classroom

When a student cannot be scheduled into an elective course, we move on to their next alternate selection, permitting them to have a course which might be their second or third choice.

Students who did not return their course request and/or did not choose alternates will be scheduled at the discretion of the administration into classes which have room.

Schedules will be mailed home prior to the start of school with a one week period in which parents can request any corrections or changes to a schedule prior to the start of school.

Homeroom teacher names will be posted for orientation and final schedules will be distributed during orientation and in first period on the first day of school.

### Exceptional Student Education

Montford Middle School has a comprehensive offering of ESE courses for our students. From part-time, resource, or full time ESE courses, there is a place for everyone.

ESE schedules will be formulated after the completion of the IEP conference held this spring/summer involving the

current teacher, parent, and MMS teacher that will be assigned to be your student's case manager for the next year.

While your student may have received a course request in the spring at their current school, the course request completed at the time of the IEP conference

meeting will be the one that is used for final placement.

The ESE department chair and curriculum coordinator will review the schedule of each ESE student in the summer to check for proper placement and to make sure the requirements of the IEP have been met.

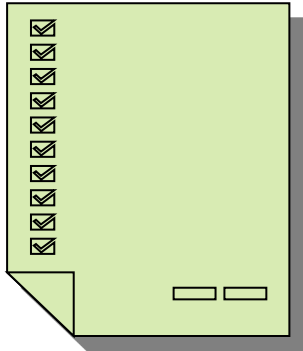






### Supply List

A general supply list will be available on our school website and at out front desk. While we have attempted to make this list as comprehensive as possible, each student may be asked to add to this list after attending classes.



### Fees

Some classes, such as science, music courses, and other electives may require a small lab fee. These may be sent to the teacher requesting the fee. These fees are necessary to provide the hands on experience which our students require to successfully attain concept mastery and hands on performance criteria in these classes. A fee matrix is published on the website.

### Textbooks

Each student will be assigned a textbook in each academic class. Students are responsible for protecting their textbooks from vandalism, theft and neglect. Textbooks range from \$40-\$80 in cost and should be returned at the end of the year with minor wear. Books that are damaged or not returned must be paid for prior to departing from Montford.

### Summer Reading and Math Assignment

Montford Middle School has joined our sister schools in the district in assigning a summer reading and optional math assignment. The book you read is your choice from the assigned listing and grade level. The reading list and assignment will be available on our website and communicated to

5th grade teachers. Should it become lost, you may get another list from the MMS website; visit Montford Middle School, or check your local book store/retailer later in the summer.

math. This level is determined by prognosis testing and teacher recommendations. This assignment will be posted on the school website.

Your math assignment is optional and is based upon the recommended level of

Remember, your summer reading is due the first few weeks of school.



### Homework

Homework is a required part of middle school. For many new 6th graders, it can become very cumbersome if it is not completed and done at the proper time.

may take many hours to complete, but should not be attempted in one marathon night, but worked on overtime on a nightly basis. Time management is the key to having a successful home life and surviving any homework concerns.

In addition to assigning the homework assignment in class, our teachers post their assignments on their webpage to remind students of what and when things are due. A homework assignment should not last more than 30 to 45 minutes in each class per night. Projects and assignments which are long term in duration

Remember, homework is a form of practice and studying. By standards, 70% of your overall grade in each class is derived from classroom assessments. High school credit courses require greater amounts of homework/practice.



## Grades

All course grades are at least 70% based off assessments (Tests, Quizzes, Projects, etc.), and 30% based off other assignments (Homework, Classwork, etc). High school credit core courses and Gifted 7th and 8th grade core course grades are based off an 80% assessments and 20% other

assignments scale.

At the start of school, each of your teachers will let you know their plans and timelines for updating their online grades site. Teachers are not required to update their Gradebook each time a student earns a grade, but are expected to update at least once per week. You will

be provided with student and parent access codes during the first month of school.

We cannot set a timeline for teachers to update online grades. They are by contract under no requirement to post grades except twice per nine weeks and an online syllabus is unheard of in their current contract. Our teachers continue to publish their course information and grades because they feel it necessary for middle schoolers and their parents to remain informed of their progress.

## Contacting Teachers

Communication is the key to success for any middle school student. Communication between the home and school can be beneficial for many reasons.

It is the belief of the teachers at MMS that communicating with the parent and their awareness of what is happening in school can do nothing but benefit the student and enhance their grades in class.

In addition to Gradebook, our teachers have an e-mail listing on the school website and welcome e-mails from parents with questions, concerns, or accolades when warranted.

Of course, phone calls or conferences with parents are welcomed. With each teacher assigned at least 120 students per day, it is impossible to make verbal contact in regards to each grade for every student.

This is why online grades have become so important. However, they are only as good as parents checking their results.

Please remember you must give a 24 hour notice to visit campus. You must check in as a visitor in the front office upon arrival.



## Grade Reports & Student Recognition

Report cards are distributed quarterly by 6th period teachers. They are usually printed and distributed two weeks after the conclusion of a grading period to be sent home to parents via the student. Students may earn recognition each grading period by achieving honor roll status.

Progress alerts are distributed at the mid-point of each nine week grading period. Each student's progress re-

port is merely a confirmation that the parent has viewed their students' Pinpoint grade report and acknowledges his/her progress in their classes.

In addition, each quarter one special MMS 8th grade student receives the "TOP Award" from the school administration and business-partnership for their outstanding contributions to the academic and cultural success of the student body.

## Absence

Students returning from an absence should bring a note from their parent to excuse their absence to the office the day of their return.

Make up work is the responsibility of the student to acquire and return. There is a one day grace period for each day of class missed for an assignment that was given during an absence. Work assigned prior should be given to the teacher immediately upon your return.

## Montford Dress Code

MMS addresses all school rules and our dress code with a common sense attitude. Our dress code is fairly simple. It follows the standards set by the Leon County School Board with adopted appropriate attire for all to follow. A discipline handbook will be distributed at the start of the school year, including a dress code.

MMS makes the following additions to the district wide dress code:

- No hats, non-prescription eye-wear, or other head gear will be permitted on the campus of the school.

- Spaghetti straps, halter tops, bathing attire, swim suits, or low cut tops will not be permitted.
- Clothes advertising tobacco, alcohol, or inappropriate sayings will not be permitted.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- All pants must be adjusted to the proper level and fit with a belt with no undergarments showing.

Dress code violations will be addressed according to the student handbook.

## Electronic Devices

Students may bring electronic devices such as cell phones, i-pods, and other devices to school. However, they must be placed in their book bag and secured in their locker throughout the school day until the dismissal bell.

The administration and staff will not waste valuable teaching time to look for cell phones or other electronic devices which were brought on campus. Items confiscated from students will be returned to the parent the next day. Students with multiple offenses may receive additional disciplinary actions.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices.

## Agenda Books

Each student at Montford is assigned an agenda book for their usage. These are used by our students to keep track of their assignments. The agenda also allows the parents to view on a daily basis the items in each class that their student is working toward achieving at that time.

Each planner will also include im-

portant school information similar to this newsletter and the school discipline plan for easy reference.

Planners include a hall pass for students to use any time they must leave the classroom to visit another location in the school, restroom, etc. Parents can keep track of how much time the student is spending out of the classroom on any given day.

A school calendar is posted on the website and is updated periodically. This calendar is reflected on the weekly Listserv.



## Code of Conduct



A detailed listing of school rules and disciplinary actions will be distributed the first week of school. A meeting by our administrative team and our students at the beginning of each school year will be conducted to review these rules.

We encourage our students to be productive and contributing citizens of our com-

munity and state. We ask our parents and students to review the discipline plan with their students once it is received at home after the first day of school.

Remember, self respect, self discipline, and the respect of others and their property is the basis for a successful life. Montford Middle prides itself on having some of the

most wonderful and highly motivated students in our district. We hope to maintain this honor and recognition for many years to come.



### Field Trips

Field trips are one of the highlights of middle school. From simple classroom educational trips which take up a partial day to major grade level events, trips are planned throughout the year for educational and social purposes.

Student behavior and academic achievement are used to determine eligibility for each field trip and it is the parents responsibility to grant permission for each student to attend.

The cost of any field trip must be incurred by the

parent. There are some financial scholarships provided by our PTSO on a limited basis.



### PTSO and Parent Partners Working Hard for MMS Success

Our Montford PTSO has already put many hours of dedicated hard work into our school community to make our school successful from the start.

Our elected PTSO President, Ms. Laura Ervin has done a fantastic job and continues to grow and foster a PTSO dedicated to the well being and services of our school. However, we know Ms. Ervin cannot accomplish these goals alone and they eagerly anticipate the assistance of our many dedicated and hard working par-

ents in our school community.

It takes not only a wonderful facility to make a school successful, it takes a great faculty, staff, parents, and students joined together to achieve success. We certainly have this recipe mastered with these wonderful parents who have already provided Montford Middle with so much these past seven years!



### SITE Council and School Advisory Council

Besides the administration of Montford Middle School, our school has two governing organizations which operate to develop and implement policies within the school.

Our SITE Council is the governing body of teachers and staff who set and review rules and procedures which are developed by the faculty, staff, administration, and teachers.

Our School Advisory Council (SAC) provides oversight of our many school programs, its curriculum, and gives an outside perspective on how things are operating in regards to the welfare of the school, the facility, and the staff. Our SAC is comprised of parents and community business partners. Our SAC doesn't just identify potential problems. They work in conjunction with our school

to solve situations before they become problems.



### High School Classes

Montford Middle School is proud to offer up to nine high school credits to our students who qualify for such an advanced curriculum.

MMS has established high school offerings in the areas of math, (Algebra I and Algebra I Honors, and Geometry Honors), foreign language (Spanish I and Spanish II), science (Earth Space Science and Biology), 3-D Art, and Theatre I and II.

By taking high school credit classes in middle school, students can take more advanced classes in high school and progress further into a subject area. They can also create openings in their high school schedule to pursue other electives that might interest them in the fine arts or other areas of study outside the normal academic curriculum.

High school credit courses in middle school are wonderful opportunities for our students, but not necessarily for everyone. Students must pass the pre-requisite course of study for each high school class that might be required. Attendance is critical for the success in high school credit classes.

Some examples of a pre-requisite are:

- Students must pass the prognosis test and have a solid B average or higher in the previous year’s math class to enroll in High School Credit Algebra I.
- Geometry has a pre-requisite of High School Credit Algebra I.
- Students must have passed their previous year’s language arts with an A or B average, meet required score on the prognosis tests, and receive a teacher recommendation to enroll in Spanish I.
- To enroll in Spanish II, students must have successfully completed Spanish I with a high C average or better.
- Enrollment in Earth/Space Science requires enrollment in High School Credit Algebra I.
- Enrollment in Biology requires a student to be participating in Geometry and have successfully completed Earth Space Science.
- Acceptance in 3-D Art or the High

School Credit Theatre Classes requires the student to achieve an overall average of 3.0 in their academic coursework, and complete an application.

These requirements are designed to provide safeguards to ensure our students do not get too far over their heads and begin to struggle in course work. Students taking high school credit classes in middle school have started their high school transcript.

Advancement into these high school credit classes is a terrific opportunity; however, these courses should not be taken lightly nor chosen for students simply based upon what the neighborhood students are taking. Enrollment in a high school credit class comes with some expectations in regards to a student’s maturity level, the ability to be self motivated and eager to learn.

Parents and students should consider the complexity of having multiple high school credit courses on their schedule.

### Arriving Late and Leaving Early

Students arriving late to school should be accompanied to the front office by their parents to sign-in.

Students that are chronically tardy or leave early without an unacceptable excuse more than (5) times in a calendar month or (10) times in a 90 day period will be in violation of school board attendance policy and will receive written notification from the school. Florida law allows absences for illness, medical care, death in the family, or religious holidays.

Students are not permitted to leave campus without signing out in the

front office. Parents must come in the office and sign the student out through the office. Parents must present a valid state issued picture ID to sign a student out or to visit campus during the school day.

Students leaving school to accompany another student home on the school bus must have permission with a written note from their parent turned into the main office by 9:45 A.M. so office personnel may verify by phone the purpose and content of the note.

### Contacts

- Schedules, &
- Curriculum..... Rebecca Shultz
  - Guidance .....Sonja Gitlin
  - Guidance..... Elizabeth Hirst
  - Attendance..... Rebecca Shultz
  - Discipline..... Dan Molinaro
  - Transportation..... Deborah Thomas
  - S.R.D..... Deputy Halligan
  - Registrar..... Lori Hager
  - Activities Director... Monica Anderson
  - Maintenance..... Darryl Sanders
  - Lunchroom..... Ricky Jigger
  - PTSO..... Laura Ervin
  - Morning Program ... Lynn Tucker
  - Afternoon Program. Jarrod Lawson