



2023 - 2024 School Year

Horseheads Middle School Newsletter

Orientation Edition

Welcome to Horseheads Middle School

On behalf of all of us at Horseheads Middle School, we welcome you as a new member of our school community. Students and staff at the middle school work within the framework and fundamental characteristics of our **Raider Way** and **THINK** programs.

Our **Raider Way** program guides students as they develop into trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair and caring citizens. In addition to the **Raider Way**, we also ask students to **THINK** before interacting with peers and staff. **THINK** requires students to ask themselves if their written and spoken communication is **True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary and Kind**.

In addition, we encourage students to follow the **FISH Philosophy**, which teaches us the principles of: *Choose Your Attitude, Make Their Day, Be There and Play.*

We encourage all students to develop a **Growth Mindset**. By having a **Growth Mindset**, students can develop the grit necessary to persevere through challenging tasks and view failure as an opportunity for learning.

Working within the frameworks of the **Raider Way, THINK, FISH** and **The Growth Mindset**, we are committed to providing a quality education for all students within a nurturing environment. The educational

demands placed on our students continue to increase as we prepare them for college and careers. Through rigorous and relevant instruction, we provide the learning opportunities necessary for success in middle school, high school and life beyond graduation.

Student success increases when schools and families work together. Therefore, please contact us with any questions, concerns or suggestions as we work together to provide valuable learning opportunities for our students.

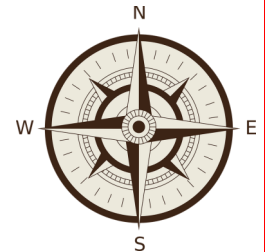
Point Yourself in the Right Direction!

Orientation and Self-guided Tour: August 28th at 8:30am and 6:00pm

Students will meet with their school counselors, pick-up their schedules, tour the building and practice using their lockers.

Parents will meet with the school administrators to review the middle school procedures and get their questions answered.

Both programs will last approximately 30 - 45 minutes.



Monthly newsletters are emailed. If you would like a hard copy, please contact the middle school main office.

Make it a great day,



the Raider Way!

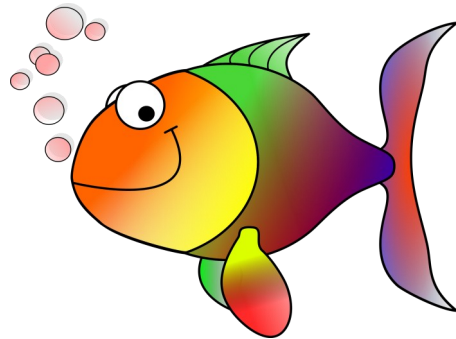
Raider Way:



- Fair and Just
- Respectful
- Responsible
- Good Citizen
- Trustworthy
- Caring and Kind

Fish Philosophy:

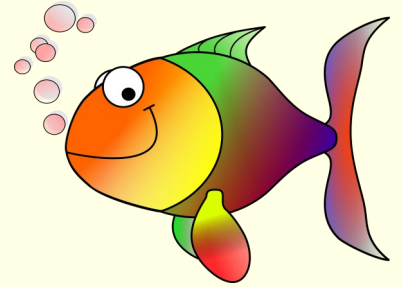
- Choose Your Attitude
- Make Their Day
- Be There
- Play



Think:
Before you say or do anything:

- *T - Is it true?*
- *H - Is it helpful?*
- *I - Is it inspiring?*
- *N - Is it necessary?*
- *K - Is it kind ?*

The Four Principles of the Fish Philosophy:



The "Fish"monger's Philosophy

What's a fishmonger, you ask? A person who sells fish of course! In 1930s Seattle, Washington, a fish-market stall opened at the Pike Place Market. The Pike Place Fish Company served its customers well for decades. When former employee, now owner, John Yokoyama, began to stir the pot, he found a better way for his employees to enjoy their job. The self-proclaimed World Famous Pike Place Fish Market became known as the place where the fishmongers threw fish — literally! The fishmongers put on a show that the customers loved. They would throw whole fish across their stall, sometimes to the customer. Each transaction became a positive, uplifting experience for everyone. The fish market became one of Seattle's top tourist attractions. How did this happen? Fish Philosophy, of course.

The workers there found that four basic principles were their key to success:

Be there in the moment (for their customers)

Play (by putting on a show)

Make their day (involving the customers)

Choose your attitude (how do you want to feel?)

At Horseheads Middle School, we want to be there for our kids everyday! By following these "Fish Philosophies" at school and at home, we will all benefit by having more fun, being involved in each others' daily lives, and continuing to learn and grow in a positive atmosphere.



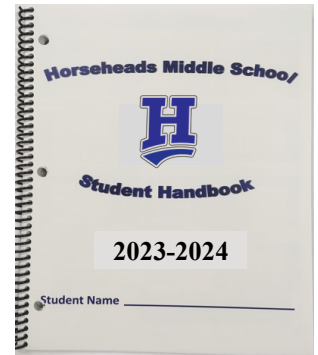


Be sure to use Parent Portal to help you keep track of your student's grades. Visit the district website or contact the guidance office if you need to sign up.

Student Handbook

All students will receive a student handbook to help them plan and adjust to middle-school expectations. Students should use the handbook to keep track of homework, record test dates and plan for long-term projects.

In addition, students must read the **District Code of Conduct** and **Middle School Building Procedures**. Important phone numbers and websites can be found in the front of the handbook. When used effectively, the handbook can help make the transition to middle school a positive experience.



"Blue Notes"

"Blue Notes" are not required to change dismissal plans at the middle school. Notes are only required if students are leaving early for appointments or when students are absent from school.

Visit Our District Website At: <http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/index.cfm>



Grade Reporting

Student progress reports are distributed to students during 10th period approximately five weeks before the end of each marking period. Report cards are distributed to students during 10th period at the end of each marking period. The district calendar shows our progress report and report card distribution dates. In addition, you will receive an all call to remind you when progress reports and report cards are issued.

Please be sure you have registered for the Parent Portal. This system

allows you to monitor your student's grades throughout the marking period. If you need to register for Parent Portal, please visit the District website or contact our guidance office.

If you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss your student's progress, please call your student's school counselor.

Students can keep track of their progress using the Student Portal at anytime during the school year.



Middle School Contacts

Middle School Main Office - 739-6357

Principal – Ron Holloway
Assistant Principal – Tom Hoeffner
Nurse – Annette Cobb
Nurse – Nicole Jackson
Main Office Secretary – Ronda Smith
Attendance Secretary - Sarah Cline

Guidance Secretary – Maggie Bleeker
Guidance Secretary – Kathryn Whitmarsh
Guidance Counselor – Marti Clark (A-K)
Guidance Counselor – Steve Micknich (L-Z)
School Psychologist – Nicole Kelley
Social Worker – Melanie Rahr
Social Worker – Kristen Sternquist



Middle School Time Schedule

Students are expected to be in first period by 7:45 for morning announcements.

Breakfast is available until 7:40 in the IS Café.

Parking Lot Construction

Look for new drop-off and pick up procedures soon!



7:15 – 7:38– Parent Drop Off

(Students Wait in the Middle School Café)

7:30 – 7:45 – Buses Unload

(Students Wait in the Field House)

7:38 – Students Dismissed to 1st period

7:45 – 8:30 – 1st Period and announcements

8:34 – 9:14 – 2nd Period

9:18 – 9:58 – 3rd Period

10:02 – 10:42 – 4th period

10:46 – 11:26 – 5th Period

11:30 – 12:10 – 6th Period

12:14 – 12:54 – 7th Period

12:58 – 1:38 – 8th Period

1:42 – 2:22 – 9th Period

2:26 – 2:30 Afternoon Announcements

2:30 – 3:05 – 10th period

3:05 Dismissal – Early Buses, Walkers and Pick-ups

3:08 Dismissal – Late Buses

Sample Student Schedule

Semester: SEM 1

	O	E
Period 01 Time 7:50 - 8:30	ENGLISH 7 Carpenter(115)	ENGLISH 7 Carpenter(115)
Period 02 Time 8:34 - 9:14	TECHNOLOGY 7 Licht(125)	TECHNOLOGY 7 Licht(125)
Period 03 Time 9:18 - 9:58	PHYS ED Gush(GYM)	STUDYHALL Farrell(120)
Period 04 Time 10:02 - 10:42	MATH 7 Andrews(110)	MATH 7 Andrews(110)
Period 05 Time 10:46 - 11:26	ART 7 Cunningham(118)	FAM&CONSUMER SCI 7 Oliver(214)
Period 06 Time 11:30 - 12:10	SCIENCE 7 Hartman(217)	SCIENCE 7 Hartman(217)
Period 07 Time 12:14 - 12:54	STUDY/LUNCH Artemow(117)	STUDY/LUNCH Artemow(117)
Period 08 Time 12:58 - 1:38	SPANISH IA Nicolae(206)	SPANISH IA Nicolae(206)
Period 09 Time 1:42 - 2:22	SOC ST 7 Artemow(117)	SOC ST 7 Artemow(117)
Period 10 Time 2:26 - 3:05	7G PERIOD 10 Carpenter(115)	7G PERIOD 10 Menechella(115)

Middle School Courses

Meets Everyday for 40 Weeks:

- ELA
- World Language
- Science
- Social Studies
- Math
- Concert Band

Meets Every Other Day for 40 Weeks:

- Accelerated Art
- Physical Education
- Raider White Band
- Raider Blue Band
- Orchestra

Meets Everyday for 20 Weeks

- Health
- Technology
- 8th-Grade Family and Consumer Science

Meets Every Other Day for 20 Weeks

- Art
- Choir and General Music
- 7th-Grade Family and Consumer Science

Students at Horseheads Middle School are scheduled for 10 periods each day and follow an odd/even-day schedule. The first day of school is always an ODD day.

Honor Roll

Students who earn an average of 85-89.99 will be placed on the Honor Roll; 90-94.99 will be placed on the High Honor Roll; 95-100 will be placed on the Distinguished High Honor Roll. We distribute Honor Roll Certificates to students during 10th period at the end of each marking period.

PONY Pass

Students who meet the criteria below will be permitted to attend the café during 10th period.

Criteria:

- Honor Roll
- No more than one detention
 - ISS and OSS automatically disqualify students for the marking period

PONY Passes may be revoked at any time for failing to follow the student Code of Conduct.

7th Grade PONY Days are Monday and Tuesday.

8th Grade PONY Days are Wednesday and Thursday.

Distinguished Honor Roll students may also attend on Friday.

Health Information

- All 7th-grade students are required to have a physical dated September 8, 2023 or later.
- An Emergency Contact Form will be sent out the first week of classes. Please remember to sign and return this form.
- Vision and hearing screenings will be conducted in the health office for all 7th-grade students, unless provided by a private physician.
- We encourage self-carry medication orders for inhalers and EpiPens.
- Inhalers and EpiPens are the only medications that a student is allowed to carry. They must be carried by the student and not put in their locker.
- Physician's order can be obtained to have other medications available in the health office for students to use as prescribed. Examples include pain relievers and cough drops.
- Routine medication requires a physician's order and parent signature each school year.
- All medications **must be delivered** to and picked up from the Health Office by a **parent or guardian**.

New York State now requires all incoming 7th-grade students receive one dose of the Meningococcal Vaccine prior to entering the 7th-grade school year. Your child will not be able to attend school beginning **9/19/23** without proof of immunization. If you are new to the district, a copy of your student's immunization record is required within 14 days of entry.

Middle School Opportunities

- Student Council
- Library Workers
- School Store Workers
- HMS Live
- Band
- Orchestra
- Vocal Music
- Science Olympiad
- 10th-period Guest Speaker Series
- Community Service Events
- 10th-Period Activity Parties
- Robotics
- School Musical
- Athletics
- Technology Guild
- Accelerated Art (HS Credit)
- Accelerated Math (Algebra I HS Credit)
- Foreign Language (HS Credit)
- Living Environment (HS Credit)
- Harmony Bridge
- National Junior Honor Society
- Yearbook Club
- BOCES Career Day
- PONY Express Pass
- Mock Interviews
- Variety Show
- Student Leadership Team
- Scholastic Challenge
- School Dance & Open Gym
- Assemblies
- GSA Club

Fall Sports:

Varsity and Junior Varsity: Cheerleading (Varsity only), Cross Country, Football, Boys Golf, Boys and Girls Soccer, Girls Swimming, Girls Tennis, Girls Volleyball, Unified Soccer (grades 9-12)

7th & 8th Grade: Cheerleading, Cross Country (boys and girls), Football, Girls Volleyball, Girls Swimming, Boys and Girls Soccer, Golf

Winter Sports

Varsity and JV: Boys and Girls Basketball, Bowling, Indoor Track (Varsity), Boys Swimming, Boys and Girls Wrestling, Cheerleading (Varsity only), Unified Bowling (grades 9-12)

7th & 8th Grade: Boys Basketball, Boys Swimming, Wrestling, Girls Basketball, Cheerleading

Spring Sports:

Varsity and JV: Boys Baseball, Girls Golf (Varsity), Boys and Girls Lacrosse, Boys Tennis, Boys and Girls Track, Girls Flag Football, Girls Softball, Unified Basketball (grades 9-12)

Modified: Boys Baseball, Boys and Girls Lacrosse, Boys and Girls Outdoor Track, Girls Softball

**Please visit the Athletics website for registration dates
and other important information.**

<http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/athletics.cfm>

Student Attendance



“Middle School attendance and GPA provide the best indication of how students will perform in high school classes.”

Source: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/5-Key-Findings-MG-Final.pdf>

Students enrolled in a high school credit-bearing course must be in attendance 85% of the scheduled class periods. Students lose credit on the 29th absence in a course that meets every day all year.

When students are absent from school, they are required to check Canvas for their missed work. Students must bring a written excuse upon returning to school. Parents may also email the excuse to the attendance clerk.

For more information regarding attendance, please visit <https://www.attendanceworks.org/research/middle-and-high-school/>

All Students Will Be Assigned a Locker

Students will be permitted to carry a backpack and a water bottle throughout the school day. Students may not carry open drink containers, such as cans of soda, or food outside of the cafeteria.

Cell Phones and Electronics

Students are required to turn off personal cell phones and other electronic devices at the 7:38 bell. Students may receive permission from the main office to use a cell phone to communicate with a parent or guardian during the school day. Teachers may also grant permission to use cell phones for educational purposes in their classroom. Unauthorized use of a cell phone will result in disciplinary action per our cell phone procedures (see student handbook for details).



School Supplies

We are asking students to come with materials they feel will help them be successful. However, the following items will be required:

- Backpack or other bag
- Three-ring binders: *We suggest one binder for AM and one for PM classes*
- Folders and dividers
- Loose-leaf paper or spiral notebook
- Composition notebook
- Dry erase markers
- Index cards
- Earbuds
- Pens, pencils and highlighters



Please Note: Some teachers may require additional supplies

** Students will receive a district-provided laptop for their individual academic use. More detailed information will be shared at the beginning of the school year.*

Middle School Award Programs

We believe that students should be honored for their academic accomplishments, as well as their commitment to following the Raider Way. We offer several awards and recognition for student achievement.

Honor Roll

Students qualify for the Honor Roll by meeting the criteria outlined below:

95-100 - Distinguished High Honor Roll

90-94.99 - High Honor Roll

85-89.99 - Honor Roll

Honor Roll certificates are distributed during 10th period following each marking period. Students who fail one or more classes, or have an Incomplete on their report card, are not eligible for the Honor Roll.

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) - by invitation only

Students meeting the initial screening criteria will be invited to apply for the National Junior Honor Society. The criteria are listed below:

1. Students must achieve an average of 90% or higher in all of the following subjects:
 - English
 - World Language
 - Math
 - Science
 - Social Studies
2. Students must demonstrate the five pillars of the NJHS:
 - Scholarship
 - Leadership
 - Service
 - Character
 - Citizenship

Once students receive their invitation to apply, they must complete an online application and attend an informational meeting by the deadline. Applicants are then reviewed by the NJHS faculty selection committee. Successful candidates will receive an acceptance letter and invitation to the ceremony in late May. Students will remain members of the NJHS as long as they continue to uphold the high standards of the society. The induction ceremony is held in June.

8th Grade Awards - by invitation only

1. President's Award for Educational Excellence
 - Students must maintain an average of 90% or higher in math, English, science, social studies and world language over the course of seven marking periods at the middle school.
3. Highest Average Award
4. Triple C Award
 - Each 8th-grade team nominates a student who they feel best meets the criteria of commitment, character and courage. These students are honored with a certificate from the Attorney General of NYS.
4. Art Award
 - Middle School art teachers select two students who demonstrate excellence in the area of art. Students will have their artwork framed and displayed at the middle school.

8th Grade Awards Assembly is held in June.

Horseheads Central School District

Information about Emergency School Closings/Delays

Schools are closed when the weather makes it impossible to have reasonable attendance or when the schools or vehicles would not be able to operate safely. The school day is delayed when inclement weather conditions improve by early morning. Inclement weather may include snow, ice, and freezing temperatures. If the school day is delayed, buses will run and schools will open two hours later than the usual time.

The district announces school closings and delays in a variety of ways:

- **Text messaging** – Parents/guardians can receive a text message if schools are closed or delayed by opting in to our text messaging service through SchoolMessenger. To opt in, text Y or Yes to 67587. You will receive a text response confirming that you are registered for texting.
- **District website** at www.horseheadsdistrict.com
- **District Facebook pages** (the district and all seven schools have pages)
- **Twitter** - @HhdsSchools
- **Local television and radio stations:**
 - o TV - WENY, WETM, Spectrum Cable News
 - o Radio – WELM 1410AM, WNKI 106.1FM/WPGI 100.9FM, WENY 1230AM/MagicFM 92.7FM/WGMM 98.7

Note: Television and radio stations also put closing/delay information on their websites.

Please do not call the radio/TV stations or the district's Transportation Office.

Important notes about school closings/delays:

- There may be a time when any of these means of communication do not work due to Internet or other issues, so we ask that you check more than one of our communication methods to determine if school is in regular session or not for that day.
- If schools are closed, they will remain closed all day for scheduled activities, including remedial programs, extra-curricular activities, use of facilities by non-school groups, and evening programs.
- When school is delayed, there is no supervision for students until schools open two hours later than the usual time, so parents should not drop their children off at school until they open. Additionally, on school delays, there is no breakfast served.
- On school delays, prekindergarten begins at 10:30am.
- If a storm develops after school begins, usual procedure is NOT to close school early. This allows time for highway crews to plow and sand the roads and has proved to be less disruptive and confusing than attempting to send students home early.

School/District Communication

Our schools publish newsletters monthly or every other month. The district has an annual budget newsletter and other communications shared as needed. These will be sent by email and are available online.

The online district calendar can be found here: <https://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/fullcalendar.cfm>. It is updated regularly. Calendar information is also shared in school and district newsletters.

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The Horseheads Central School District partners with



*The Trusted Platform
for School Community Engagement*

Parents/Guardians:

You can take advantage of our Text Messaging Service

The Horseheads School District uses the SchoolMessenger system to deliver **text messages**, straight to your mobile phone with important information about school closings, safety alerts, and more.*

You can participate in this service* by sending **"Y"** or **"Yes"** by text to our school's short code number, **67587**.

You can also opt out of these messages at any time by simply replying to one of our messages with **"Stop"**.

SchoolMessenger is compliant with the [Student Privacy Pledge™](#), so you can rest assured that your information is safe and will never be given or sold to anyone.



**Opt-In from
your mobile
phone now!**



**Just send
"Y" or "Yes"
to 67587**

i Information on SMS text messaging and Short Codes:

SMS stands for Short Message Service and is commonly referred to as a "text message". Most cell phones support this type of text messaging. Our notification provider, SchoolMessenger, uses a true SMS protocol developed by the telecommunications industry specifically for mass text messaging, referred to as "short code" texting. This method is fast, secure and highly reliable because it is strictly regulated by the wireless carriers and only allows access to approved providers. If you've ever sent a text vote for a TV show to a number like 46999, you have used short code texting.

*Terms and Conditions – Message frequency varies. Standard message and data rates may apply. Reply HELP for help. Text STOP to cancel. Mobile carriers are not liable for delayed or undelivered messages. See schoolmessenger.com/txt for more info.

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Drop Off and Pick Up

Due to the volume of students being dropped off and picked up, the line can become very long. We ask that you help alleviate unnecessary wait time by following these simple procedures:

- Utilize the entire drop-off lane. Please do not wait until you have pulled up to the Middle School main entrance to drop off your students. **Do not drop students off or pick them up in the staff and visitor parking lot.** Students should exit the vehicle as soon as it is safely stopped. Please be sure students have all of their belongings ready to go.

- **Do not drop students off on Sing Sing road.**

- Students should be walking in the door no later than 7:40 so they can be in 1st period by the 7:45 tardy bell. Students with three tardies to 1st period may be assigned a detention.

Thank you for your patience and helping our morning drop off go as safely and efficiently as possible.



Stay tuned for new parking lot map and drop-off and pick-up procedures!



Photos by Sarah Cline

